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THE  
FIRST LIEUTENANT'S STORY.

BY LADY CATHARINE LONG,

AUTHOR OF

"SIR ROLAND ASHTON," &c.

Take care that the standard of thy soul wave from the loftiest battlements.  
PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO LIEUTENANT

THE HONOURABLE FREDERIC WALPOLE, R.N.,

AND TO CAPTAIN

SIR WILLIAM HOSTE, BART, R.N.,

AS SAILORS, AND DEAR RELATIVES,

**This Book**

IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

Gen. M. H. 296, 51. Bl. 1. 30



## P R E F A C E.

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In putting forth another "Religious Novel," I would fain say a few words in—not excuse—but justification of such works; being aware that many excellent persons object to them.

It was through "Fiction" that our Lord conveyed many of His heavenly truths; introducing even supposititious appeals to God, and prayers for His mercy; and surely we cannot be wrong in venturing to follow his steps!

But it is the "Love" I am aware that is most objected to; but that objection I should like to be allowed to meet by repeating a few words of conversation on the subject, which proved effectual with a young "objecting" clergyman.

“Would you tell me—which,—Religion, or Love, you would wish left out of your own life?”

“Neither, certainly.”

“Then if not out of real life, why out of the portraiture of real life?”

With regard to the present volumes in particular, I cannot but anticipate one—(there may perhaps be many,) animadversion likely to be made: that there are too many conversions. But let it be considered in excuse, how delightful it is to convert when we have the power,—to bring before oneself, even though only in imagination, the glorious burst of joy there is in Heaven “over one ‘man’ that has repented.” In more solemn guise, I would say too, that I cannot but think that if real Christians would more frequently speak, in truth, and earnestness, and love, and gentleness, of the beautiful things of God, to those around them, they would find conversions, not of so rare occurrence as now perhaps they think. It cannot have been to cast aside their labours, that our Lord has bid us pray that more labourers might be sent into His vineyard; and I cannot think that any who

have zealously and lovingly worked for God in this life, will have to say,—when they have entered on the “deep dawn beyond the grave:” “Lord, we have toiled all night and yet caught nothing.”

LONDON,  
DECEMBER 31, 1852.



## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

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EXTRACT FROM "SIR ROLAND ASHTON."

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The shade by which my life was crost,  
Which makes a desert in my mind,  
Has made me kindly with my kind.

IN MEMORIAM.

AMONG all Henry Ashton's companions, there was but one who excited any interest in him, and that was Mr. St. Clair, the First Lieutenant. He was a middle-aged man, with a grave but pleasant countenance ; and though he was one who spoke but little, yet that little was invariably kind and conciliating. A laugh or joke seldom indeed passed his lips, but no officer on board was more tolerant of the laughter and jokes of others. Even when the "sky-larking" of the half-crazy "mids" passed almost all

bounds of endurance, and called forth hard words and severe looks from others in the ship, his indulgent smile, and kind excuse were ever ready.

“There’s a great noise below there, Mr. St. Clair,” the Captain would exclaim.

“Young spirits, Sir, young spirits ; all the better when work comes,” would be the kind-hearted answer.

Yet when in passing along the decks, his “Have a care, young gentlemen,” was heard, it was invariably treated with respect ; and the “Ay, ay, Sir,” was never more cheerfully returned than to him ; while quiet would be for a moment restored.

The light-hearted beings over whom he exercised this “mild control,” used among themselves to call him “St. John St. Clair,” John being one of his Christian names ; but the appellation was given in all kindness, for he was greatly beloved ; and the strong religious opinions which suggested the name, bringing with them no harshness, were tolerated for his sake, and in many instances indeed, became, through him, revered for their own.

Under circumstances of less intolerable suffer-

ing, Henry Ashton would often have gladly conversed with him; but it was impossible for him to talk much on indifferent subjects; and the source of his affliction was one which he could lay open to no human eye, nor could he seek comfort under it from any human voice. Scarcely indeed to Heaven could he, at that distressful time, look for consolation, "*Il était triste de la tristesse, qui était alors le fond de sa vie,*" and all his energies seemed gone.

After cruising about for some time, the ship touched at Malta; and when there, Mr. St. Clair received a letter from a friend of his who had formerly sailed with Henry Ashton, and who made particular inquiries after him, asking if he were still the life of the crew as he had formerly been. Surprised at receiving a character of him so unlike what his present appearance warranted, Mr. St. Clair watched him more closely; and he soon became convinced that it was trouble of heart which had converted the once gay and high-spirited young sailor, into the silent, melancholy being who then trod the deck with so abstracted an air. This conviction aroused all his kindly feelings,

and made him anxious, if possible, to assuage the sorrow of so young a heart.

When Henry's turn therefore came for keeping the first watch, he lingered some time on deck, waiting for an opportunity of quiet conversation with him. Henry, unaware of his object, took no notice of him ; but continued his monotonous walk up and down in silence ; till at length, full of his own sad thoughts, he stopped, and leant over the gangway, his face buried on his arm. A strong, but kind hand laid on his shoulder, soon roused him from his reverie. He started, and was rather surprised at finding it was Mr. St. Clair's ; for he had scarcely exchanged a syllable with him, excepting on matters of duty, since he had been on board.

" These night scenes waken melancholy thoughts, Mr. Ashton," said the First Lieutenant.

" Not more so than sunshine," replied Henry, gloomily.

" Not if we like holding silent communion with the Father of our spirits," said Mr. St. Clair ; " but otherwise darkness is generally felt to be a dreary thing."

“All times are much alike, I think,” replied Henry.

“To me, I confess,” said Mr. St. Clair, “these tranquil hours, when most of the poor fellows are below in their hammocks, are particularly delightful; the unusual quiet makes one more mindful of Him ‘ne’er seen, but ever nigh.’”

Henry was silent, and again leant down his head.

“Has the thought of Him no charm for you, Mr. Ashton?” continued his kind companion.

“It used to have,” answered Henry, without raising his head.

“You have not the look of one whom sin has separated from his God,” said Mr. St. Clair, in a tone which would have unlocked the closest heart.

“No,” said Henry; “I have sins enough certainly, but I have no fears of God’s anger, though I cannot just now enjoy His love.”

His young heart was touched by Mr. St. Clair’s manner; and with that yearning for commiseration so natural to all, especially to the young, when affliction is new and bewildering to them, he longed to pour forth all his miseries.

But that was impossible. His troubles did not belong to himself alone; the most sacred feelings of others were involved in them; and those he could not betray.

"Prayer will bring back God's light into your heart, young man," replied Mr. St. Clair, in a softened voice; "no sorrow can withstand His gracious presence there. You have found that, I dare say, at times."

"I have never known sorrow till now," replied Henry.

"Then you must have had the life of one of a million," sighed his companion; "but nevertheless the burden is not the lighter, because our shoulders are unaccustomed to bearing it. I don't seek your confidence as to your earthly trials; you can tell them to your God; and it is but poor pleasure to hear the record of sufferings which make one's heart bleed, while one cannot raise a finger in help. But a little word of God's peace will sometimes cheer a drooping spirit, if Satan's power be not too hard upon it. You seem, I am happy to see, to have some hope beyond this world."

"I had; but everything now seems gone!"

"Oh, that must not be," said Mr. St. Clair,

with cheerful warmth ; “ you must rouse yourself, and not let the evil one gain so much advantage over you. Remember, doubting of God’s mercy is a sore sin ; and so is rejecting His consolations.”

“ I used to think,” said Henry, “ that sorrow would always raise the heart to God ; but I find it far otherwise.”

The recollection of his conversation with Lady Constance, when he was walking with her on the first day of his arrival at Llanaven, rushed over his mind at that moment, and completely overwhelmed him. He remembered so well his own words : “ Joy on the one side, sorrow on the other, lift the soul to God ;” and as he felt how little that was now his own experience, and the memory of that delightful hour flashed across him, his spirits completely gave way, and a deep burst of grief broke for an instant the silence of the night.

Mr. St. Clair felt a painful compassion for this young and sorrowing heart ; and spoke words of kindest sympathy. After a few moments, Henry became more composed.

“ I am very weak,” he said ; “ but I trust I shall be able to look more to God than I

have done lately, and then I shall be strengthened."

Mr. St. Clair remained with him during the whole of his watch, walking up and down with him. In the course of their conversation, he adverted to circumstances in his own life, which had shown forth the power of God to sustain under trial and affliction; and as Henry Ashton expressed a wish to know what they were, he gave him the outline of a life, which did indeed show that God is "a very present help in time of trouble."

The outline of his life, which Mr. St. Clair gave that night to Henry Ashton, was afterwards more fully filled up during frequent conversations which they had together. For the sake of convenience, these detached accounts have been connected in a continuous form; while many events, with which it was impossible for Mr. St. Clair to be minutely acquainted, have been supplied from other sources.

THE  
FIRST LIEUTENANT'S STORY.

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CHAPTER I.

Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,  
The Gods themselves throw incense.

KING LEAR.

Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all.

TENNYSON.

“YOU have heard the youngsters on board here,” said Mr. St. Clair, as he began his narrative, “call me by the name of John ; to which they have added the blessed epithet of ‘ Saint ; ’ but ill borne out, I fear, by any great holiness in me. But that is not my first christian name ; Wilfred is the name by which I used to be called ; but I had a fancy—a silly one perhaps—which made me shrink from hearing it

used now, so have always called myself by my other. I only mention this, because in saying what I am about to say, you might be puzzled in hearing of me with an ‘alias.’

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Well, you must know that some years ago—it was in the year twenty-five—when I was little more than a lad, our ship was cruising in the Mediterranean, and, running up the Gulf of Genoa, anchored for a time off Nice; where we all of course in turn obtained leave to go ashore.

I was wandering about there alone one beautiful summer’s evening, delighted to have the springing grass once more beneath my feet, and to exchange the tarry atmosphere of the ship, for the scent of the wild flowers which bloomed in profusion all around. The sun was sinking; and I had been watching its downward course, and the red clouds that followed its disappearance, when through the thickening gloom, my eye caught another light, which I perceived must proceed from some burning building. I rushed up the little knoll which hid that part of the town and shore from me,

and then saw that a solitary house, standing near the sea, was in one blaze of fire.

In a moment I was before it, in the midst of a motley crowd of sympathizing, but paralyzed spectators, who were venting in the wildest exclamations their grief and horror at the work of destruction going on ; which feelings were raised to frenzy a moment after, by the sight of an old man, and a young girl suddenly coming out on one of the stone balconies which belonged to each window, their figures clearly defined against the glowing fire, which seemed to fill the whole interior of the house.

Exclamations of " Salvate la," " La poveretta," " La Bella," resounded on all sides, accompanied by the frantic gesticulation, and vehement action natural to the Italian ; while no one seemed to do anything, or to know indeed what to do. No ladder was at hand ; so I ran down to some boats which were lying on the shore, intending to unstep one of the masts, and see what I could do with that. There I found some of my own men bound on the same errand ; so in a few moments we had secured two of the highest we could find, and carrying them up to the burning house, we spliced them strongly to-

gether, to make them reach the window at which the old man and girl were standing; when I swarmed up them, as none but a monkey or sailor can do; and having reached the balcony, jumped over it, and without wasting a moment, was about to put my arm round the girl to carry her down, when she drew back, exclaiming in English, "Save him first;" and pointing in frightful agony to her father.

I tried still to save her; but she kept retreating backwards, almost into the flames; till seeing that time was being lost, I took hold of the old man, who being thin and emaciated, was happily of light weight, and without the least warning, lifted him over the balustrade, to which I left him to cling by natural instinct, till I could get over myself, and prepare to slide down the mast with my burden.

Difficult at all times it would have been to have slid down from such a height with the weight of another person on one's arm, on such poles too, with their splicing cords tearing one's hands to pieces; but with that old man I thought I never could have reached the ground in safety; for he struggled the whole way so violently, as made it almost impossible to hold

him ; while he poured forth such volleys of execrations in my ear for having saved him first instead of his child, that had it not been for that child's sake, I think I should have complied with his ceaseless orders to "let him go," and have shaken him off as one would a cat that was scratching one. However, I held him firm till we came within a yard of the ground, when letting him drop, without waiting to see what happened to him, up I was again, in an agony to save the devoted girl who had risked her life for her parent.

Seeing that my hands were bleeding, one of my sailors called to me to let him go aloft this time ; but nothing could have induced me to have given up the joy of rescuing a being in whose safety I then felt such an intense interest. It was no thought, however, of love, which at that moment influenced me ; for had it been a boy who had acted in that way, I should have felt just the same ; and as to beauty, I had seen nothing of that to inspire me ; for even if I had had time to look, her clothes and face were all so covered with smoke, that she might have been as fair as an angel, or as black as a Kaffir, for anything that I could see.

Her situation was indeed most perilous at that moment, for the flames had gained such a height that they burst out incessantly through the window before which she was standing. She had had sufficient presence of mind, however, to get on the outside of the balustrade, wrapping close round her the folds of the large shawl she had on ; and then clinging on for her life, she endured with wonderful fortitude the raging heat ; sheltering her face as best she could, but being forced to allow her hands to be scorched terribly by the flames. Her head was so covered up, and the roar of the fire was so loud, that she did not know I was near her again till I put my arm round her, and told her to let go, and trust herself to me. At the sound of my voice she lifted up her head ; and then indeed, spite of the smoke and dust, I met a look that sank for ever into my heart.

In a moment I began my second descent ; but how different were my feelings to what they had been before ! Instead of a furious old man, struggling with rage, and pouring forth abuse in the shrill voice of querulous age, I had one who, save from her slight weight, added nothing to my difficulties ; but who, clinging to

me with self-preserving impulse, breathed into my very heart words of gratitude and blessing, as the saviour of her father and herself. I felt then, through all that pain and peril, what I have never ceased to feel—the blessedness of loving, and of being able to help those one loves ! Yes, at that moment I felt as if my fate were bound up with that heroic girl's for ever ; and though, I dare say, had we parted immediately after, that feeling would have passed off, and have been remembered merely as the fleeting emotion of an excited moment, yet as we were not so soon to part, it deepened on till, it became the life of my life—the joy of my life—the sorrow of my life !

During our descent, there was not a breath heard among the dense crowd below ; though at the moment that I had taken my charge from the scorching of the flames, a wild cry of exultation had arisen ; but when, having successfully performed the difficult descent, I gave the girl into the outstretched arms of her father, such acclamations as I had never before heard, rent the sky.

Ungracious as the old man had been before, the moment that his child was in safety, his

gratitude seemed to know no bounds. He seized my bleeding hands, and kissed them convulsively; whilst he called me by every good name his grateful heart could suggest. At length I disengaged myself from him, for I ought long ago to have been back on board ship; and stammering something about "pleasure at having been of service, &c.," I turned, with rather a heavy heart, to make my way back to my boat. But that was not to be—quietly at least; for the people who had pressed closely around us, set up another deafening shout as soon as my intention was perceived; and in a moment I found myself hoisted up aloft on the shoulders of the nearest men, and about to be carried in triumph to the shore.

I was nothing loth, for I was young and full of spirits, and thought it very pleasant to be the hero of the moment. I had been full of sweet and gentle emotions a moment before; but my old light-heartedness returned in an instant, when I found myself thus suddenly "famous;" and as I looked back in triumph at those I was leaving, I was more than amused, I was pleased to my heart, by the joyous look of the girl, whose animation beamed through all the dis-

figurement the fire had made, with a charm no look had ever before possessed for me ; while the old man seemed to forget everything in his enthusiasm, and waved his hand on high, as his voice was raised above that of the whole crowd, in loud and long hurras. At length I was quietly seated in my boat, and my fine fellows were pulling away with all their strength, to make up for the lost time.

So rapidly had nightfall succeeded the setting of the sun, that by the time we reached the ship, everything was nearly enveloped in darkness, save from the ruddy glow of the still flaming house, whose fierce reflection lay broken and dancing on the waters astern of the boat ; and which lit up every rope and spar of the frigate, when we approached her, as clearly as daylight. The other side of the vessel lay in deep shade ; and the calm waters of the bay received, and returned faithfully the perfect shadow of her beautiful proportions, as they were cast on them by the bright flames from the shore.

Very different was the tone of feeling with which I was received on board, from that which I had left on shore. The Captain—Captain

Normanton—was a jealous-spirited man; and enough had been visible of what had gone on at the fire, through the ship's glasses, to make him fully aware that I had borne rather an active part there; and my triumphant mode of conveyance from the flaming pile to the boat, seemed to have raised a feeling of great displeasure in his breast. My reception, therefore, was by no means a gracious one; and instantly dashed to the ground all the high spirits with which I had run up the ship's side.

“You have broken your leave, Mr. St. Clair,” he said, in a quiet, cutting tone.

“I am very sorry, Sir; but just as I was going to join my boat, I saw that house on fire yonder, and I thought you could not be displeased—”

“But I am displeased, Sir!” he exclaimed, in an angry voice; “nothing can be said in excuse of disobedience. The discipline of the service is at an end, if the catching fire of every Italian vagabond's house is to put a commanding officer's word aside. I give up my command if that is the case, Sir!” And he tossed up his hands, as if he were casting his commission to the winds.

"I am very sorry, Sir," I began—

"You are not very sorry, Sir," he interrupted.

"Indeed, Sir—" I attempted again to begin.

"Don't contradict me, Sir! Go below, Sir; you shall hear of this again. Go below, Sir."

I descended the hatchway as fast as I could, as much pleased to get out of his sight, as enraged at the manner of my dismissal.

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The next day I longed to go on shore, for I had an intense wish to see the old man, or at least his daughter again. I had, as I have said, but little idea what she was like; and I had a hope, not to be wondered at, of finding her lovely and delightful, so that nothing might break the charm with which my present thoughts of her were filled. But I might as well have expected to have been made Grand Seignior, as to have been allowed to put foot on shore for days to come; and I had just wisdom enough to keep me from asking it. But I could not repress a feeling of annoyance, when I heard the Captain order out his boat to take him on shore, and saw him go down the ship's side; the measured strokes of the oars,

all cleaving the waters, as if worked by but one pair of hands, falling painfully on my ear.

As the boat neared the shore, an apprehension seized me, lest the Captain should see her, of whom I was thinking so much, and whom I felt a selfish wish at that moment to hide from every eye. I seemed to have a right to her beyond all others; and fretted myself into a fever of irritation and jealousy on the subject, as foolish as it was painful.

The Captain returned to the ship in a mood not much sweeter than that in which he had left it. He went on shore again the next day, and the next, and the next; while I was forced to remain on board, in a state of irritation and vexation, difficult to describe. I dreaded, too, that we might leave the place without my being able to go again on shore; and such was the fever of excitement to which I worked myself up, that all sorts of wild ideas crossed my brain; and I determined that should that be the case I would desert—swim ashore in the night time, and lie hid till the vessel was gone—anything, in short, rather than leave the place without again seeing her whom I had saved. More rational ideas, however, returned in a short time;

and before doing anything desperate, I bethought me of using the simple expedient of asking leave again.

I did so the next day, and was not refused. The Captain's countenance, however, betrayed displeasure and annoyance, even to a more than usual degree ; and I was struck by a restlessness and anxiety in his look and manner, which I had never observed before.

As the time for my going drew near, his uneasiness visibly increased. He stopped several times in his ceaseless paces up and down, as if with an intention of speaking to me ; but glancing round and always seeing some one else near, he passed on again. At length, with an evident effort, he bade me follow him to his cabin. I did so with a trembling heart ; but when the door was shut behind me, I am mistaken if his pulse beat not three to one of mine. Well I know, at least, that while my eye was raised steadily to his, his fell beneath mine, and he seemed anything but at his ease.

" Mr. St. Clair," he began, in a deprecating manner and in the mildest tones I had ever heard come from his lips, " you were rather over your leave the last time you went on shore."

“I was, Sir,” I answered; all my irritation vanishing in an instant under his kindness of manner; “I was very sorry for it, and will take care it shall not be the case again; but, in fact, I thought of nothing, when I saw human lives in danger.”

“Quite right, quite right,” he replied; “I should have done the same in your place. I was angry at the time—perhaps rather too much so; but discipline must be maintained, and I did not then know all the circumstances. I have since learnt them—for I met—accidentally one day—those whom you saved—and they spoke very handsomely of your conduct.”

This was said with a degree of hesitation and embarrassment which I should have been at a loss to account for, had not my jealous fancy at once taken fire, and convinced me that it proceeded from the Captain’s having not only seen, but fallen in love with the young lady.

The fury that possessed me at this idea, I cannot describe. I was like a hungry wolf from whom the prey had been snatched; the lioness robbed of her young;—anything in short blind with fury and revenge. Evil passions rose in my breast like a whirlwind, and shook my whole

frame. I had no internal principle then to oppose to the violent feelings of my violent nature, but was a perfect slave to them ; and nothing but the severe discipline which, happily for me at that moment, the Captain certainly maintained, could have prevented me from some furious outbreak. I could have rushed upon him, strangled him, chucked him through the window, or performed any, or every other prank of absurd insanity and horror.

And all for what ? I have often thought of it since. Because the poor man told me he had seen a young girl, whom I could scarcely have been said even to have seen myself ; but to whom I chose to fancy I had an exclusive right !

But it is useless to argue these matters. It is not the thing, as it seems, in outward appearance alone, that constitutes the thing as it really is. The feelings on which it falls characterize it. "*La chose actuelle, et la chose sensible,*" are often mightily different things. A note of music, a flower, a sunset, are matters of indifference to some—rapture to some—agony to some. Yet it is but one note, one flower, one sunset. Truly, "the heart knoweth its own

bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy !”

And yet it was not merely that Captain Normanton had seen this object of my imagined love ; for had he said freely and openly that he had done so, I should have thought nothing of it, but perhaps been rather gratified at thinking that something might have been said in my favour ; but it was his concealing it at first, and then speaking of it with such confusion, that disturbed my mind ; and which gave to the whole thing a character of importance in my eyes, which time, alas ! proved that it too truly possessed.

I had, however, to answer him ; which I did by uttering some unintelligible sounds, about “ duty” and “ happiness,” and so forth ; my voice trembling so with suppressed emotion, that I was in terrible fear lest he should observe it. He seemed to make out more of my meaning, however, than I did myself ; for he told me “ my sentiments did me honour,” and that “ he should not fail to remember my conduct ;” and so dismissed me, nothing loth, to go on shore.

## CHAPTER II.

They that love early become like-minded—

They grow up leaning on each other, as the olive  
and the vine.

Youth longeth for a kindred spirit, and yearneth for a  
heart that can commune with his own.

PROV. PHILOSOPHY.

I WENT on shore, and lost no time in trying to discover my new friends; and after a few inquiries, I found myself opposite the new abode of "General Sydney" and his daughter.

But how unlike the old one! That had been a large, fine, ornamented house, standing alone, looking on the bay in front, and with beautiful gardens behind; all speaking of wealth, and even grandeur. This was a retired dwelling, in a dark street, having an air scarcely of respectability, certainly not comfort, and surrounded by

a dense and shabby population. I stood a moment at the door, thinking it impossible that it could be the house ; then determining in my heart that it *should not* be, I was turning away, when a little Italian barber opposite,—having been watching me it seemed, and having with the intuitive quickness of his nation, gathered from my dress and countenance the story of my expectation and disappointment,—rushed across the narrow street ; and with nods innumerable, showered with a rapidity I had thought human muscles incapable of, assured me that it was the house I was seeking.

“La case del Generale Sydney!” I exclaimed ; less in a tone of inquiry, than of indignant remonstrance.

“Sicuro, sicuro, ’cellenza,” he replied ; recommencing the incredible nods, which my speaking had suspended for a moment ; while stepping quickly forward, he briskly rang the bell, to prove his moral certainty of the fact ; his countenance all the while beaming with delight at the pleasure of knowing he was right, and of setting me so too. In a moment, however, the bright look faded, and the nods became “rallentandi,” intermingled with gentle shakes ;

as in a feeling, sympathising tone, he began speaking of their late misfortune ; going on with a rapid harangue, of which, with my then very imperfect knowledge of his language, I could merely catch a few words, such as “disgrazia, incendio,” &c.

I could have hugged him for his kind feeling for them ; but at that moment the door opened, and his vivacity instantly again returning—before I could speak a word—he had asked whether, “Il Signor Generale,” or “La Signorina,” were at home ; and receiving a reply in the affirmative, he turned on me a look of ineffable triumph, and making me welcome by a flourish of his hand, to the entry of the dark door and darker passage, he bounded again across the street ; and by the time I had turned to thank him, he was again *encadré* in his own doorway, amid his “cinque perruche e pomata fina.”

How strange it seems now ! But in going over these things again, I feel for the moment quite like my old self. I seem to take myself by the arm as it were, and walk with myself through these scenes, just as one might accom-

pany any other friend ; but with this notable difference, that it is only the outward things in which one can accompany another ; whilst, in accompanying one's past self, all the feelings and emotions of the *then* heart, all the sorrows or brightness of the *then* spirits, rise up into life once more, and become, for the moment, one's own again.

I see that little barber standing in his doorway as distinctly, now that I am talking of him, as if I were still talking to him ; and the merriment he caused me, flashes up again once more, as if there had not been since, mountains of trouble, and rivers of tears to crush and extinguish it.

I was at that time so very high-spirited, that the merest nothing would send me off into fits of laughter. I don't think that up to that time I could ever have been said to really think of anything ; though I was always fond of reading, of poetry, of music, of the beautiful of all kinds ! But as to feeling, I was like a dog, or a cat, or a robin, or wren, or anything that just feels what it feels at the minute, and forgets it the next ; and being full of life and spirits, mirth and merriment had formed the main part of my

waking existence. I don't often feel inclined to laugh now, but I thank God from my heart for the cheerful spirit He still gives me ; and am glad always to sympathise with every burst I hear come from hearts as yet unsubdued by trouble.

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Well ! after losing sight of my animated, but tender-hearted barber, I followed the servant along the gloomy passage. My thoughts had been a little distracted by my colloquy at the door, from the anxious anticipations which had, for days before, occupied them ; but now again they rushed upon me with that force which every one with strong feelings has probably felt, but of which to others it is vain to speak ; and when I got to the door, which was as the veil which divided the imaginary from the real, my heart literally ceased to beat.

It seems all very foolish now, but imagination has wondrous effect, and there is but one power that I know of, that can control its exciting force. Of that power I knew nothing then !

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When the drawing-room door opened, I found it an apartment far better than the entrance-side of the house would have led me to suppose; and the windows, opening to the ground, showed a cool and leafy garden beyond, whose grateful fragrance was delightful, as I left the dark, dank passage, and entered again "the warm precincts of the cheerful day." The objects of my search were not in the heated room, they had wisely sought the green shelter of the garden.

The servant having pointed them out to me, left the apartment, rather to my dismay, leaving me to introduce myself; and, after pausing a moment, in great perturbation, I summoned up courage, and stepped out on the little terrace which was under the window. The sound of my footsteps caused the old man's daughter—for as yet I had not learnt to think of her by any other name—to turn her head, as she was sitting reading under the flickering shadow of some flowering tree—the profile of the whole figure so beautiful! On seeing me she started, though almost imperceptibly, the faint colour leaving her cheek, and her countenance showing fear and trouble. In another instant, however,

the whole expression of her face changed ; the crimson blood flushed up again to her very temples ; and hastily rising, she flew past the old man, who was sitting with his back towards me, and meeting me just as I had descended a few steps of the terrace, caught my extended hand in both of hers—forgetful, as she afterwards told me, of everything but that I had saved their lives—and burst into tears.

I did not know what to do ; I was young and unmannered, and I remember I could only keep repeating : “ Oh don’t, don’t,” in the utmost distress. But my embarrassment was soon relieved by the old man’s suddenly turning round in his chair, having been awakened from his noon-day sleep by his child’s dress brushing past him ; when seeing her in tears by my side, he exclaimed, in a shrill tone :

“ Eh ! what ? What’s the matter—what’s the matter ? What are you crying for there with that young man ? Who is he ? How came he here ? ”

His daughter, who could not help smiling, spite of her tears, went up to him, as he still kept angrily eyeing me, and said something

to him in a low voice, I standing meanwhile where she left me, frightened out of my senses.

“Eh—what?” he exclaimed again hastily.

“The young officer,” I heard her say, her voice trembling between laughing and crying, “who saved us from the fire.”

“Eh! you don’t say so!” And putting his two hands on his knees, he sprang up like a grasshopper, and bounding towards me, quicker than even his daughter had done, he in his turn grasped my hand in both of his; then put his arm round my shoulder, patting me on the back, and striving by dumb show, to express the emotion and pleasure which his agitated lips could not speak.

I too felt choking; so for a time not a word was spoken, as we all three stood together smiling through our tears, and crying through our smiles; till at last the old man suddenly exclaimed:

“How are your hands, though? you had torn the skin all off them.”

“Oh, they are quite well now,” I answered; disengaging them from his firm hold, and

stretching them out to show how perfectly they were healed.

“And yours?” I added, turning to his daughter.

She extended hers too, to show that they also had recovered all ill effects of the fire; and the contrast between her small white ones, and my large sun-burnt ones, as we stretched them out together, was so strange, that it turned the scales quite to the side of smiles, and in a joyous peal of laughter we found relief at last for our excited spirits.

We now unreservedly wiped our eyes, and sat down together to be very merry; but a wearied, abstracted air soon stole over the old man's face, and in a little while he had fallen asleep again.

“He gets tired so soon,” said his daughter, in a low voice; “and since that frightful day he has seemed much shaken.”

“How did the fire happen?” I asked.

“No one knows; but it was so rapid that we lost almost everything. But, however, all lives were saved, so we should be thankful. The servants were all below, and easily got out; and—you saved us.”

Her eyes met mine as she said this, and her lip again quivered. I looked away, and could not answer her ; for I had entered on a new existence, whose language I did not know. After a time I stammered out :

“ Your father is General Sydney, is he not ? ”

“ Yes,” she replied.

“ And your name is — ? ”

“ Mary Terèsa Sydney.”

“ Why do you call it Terèsa, and not Theresa ? ”

“ Because it is Terèsa, and not Theresa,” she replied, with an amused expression of countenance. “ It was my mother’s name : she was an Italian.”

“ An Italian ! ” I exclaimed ; betraying in my tone somewhat of my English prejudices. “ However, that accounts for it.”

“ Accounts for what ? ”

“ For your dark eyes, and your way of speaking many words not quite like other people.”

“ I am sorry you say that,” she replied, rather mortified. “ I thought I spoke quite like an Englishwoman. I have tried very much ”

“ Why ? do you like the English ? ”

"Surely I do ; my father is English. Yet *I* love the Italians too."

This was said with a little look and emphasis, which clearly established her claim to her foreign origin ; while it also proved that she had read my prejudices but too clearly in my tone.

"Of course you do," I said, trying to mend the matter a little ; "why should you not ? But I never knew any Italians."

"I consider myself, however, more English than Italian," she added ; "though I have never yet seen England."

"Why, has your father always lived here ?"

"Always since my birth. My mother died here, ten years ago, when I was but seven years old, and he could never afterwards bear to leave the place ; though he has often talked of going to his own country."

"And have you always lived alone with that old—I mean, with your father ?"

Her eye had glanced up quickly at my first irreverential term ; but seeing that I had corrected myself, she took no notice of it ; but looking at her father as he slept, with great affection, she answered :

"Yes, always ; his relations were far off, and

so were mine; but then he never left me, and I was quite happy."

"Had you no companions living with you?"

"None, but him."

"But you lived in such a large house?"

"Yes; and it was very pleasant. We had our winter, and our summer rooms. Oh! I was so happy there!" and a sadness overspread her face. "But it is very foolish," she added, "and very wrong to grieve, for we are so comfortable here; and if I did not think about the old house being gone, it would be just the same to me now in this little garden, as it used to be, when, as a great pleasure, my father used to bring me here sometimes, and we had a little feast—for this is my nurse's house—and she loved to have me here; and my father liked better to come to her, for a time, than to take another house just at this moment. So the only difference lies in my foolish thoughts; except, to be sure, you were not here then."

"And does that make it more disagreeable?" I asked, wanting her to say something pleasant to me.

"No," she said, colouring a little; "I only

meant that you *were not* here then, and that that *was* a difference."

"It makes a great difference to me, I know, being here or not."

She seemed embarrassed, and so was I; and there was a dreadful pause. At last she asked me:

"Have you a father?"

"No."

"Nor brothers or sisters?"

"No; nothing but a mother."

"You were as lonely then as I, with only her?"

"Yes; but then I have never been much at home, of late years; always at school or at sea."

"How sad your mother must be then, living all—quite alone?"

"I suppose she is; but somehow, I never thought of it before."

"Not think of your mother!" she exclaimed, looking at me with astonished eyes.

"Oh yes; I always thought of her, of course; but I never thought whether she was happy or not. I am sure if I had thought she was unhappy, I would have done anything for her."

"I dare say you would," she said; "you don't look unkind."

I was pleased at her saying that, and was silent for a moment, when she said :

“ You asked me my name, just now, and I told you ; will you tell me yours ? ”

“ Wilfred John St. Clair,” I said.

She smiled, as if she liked the name ; and certainly it had never sounded so well to my own ear before.

“ Your father must have been very much older than your mother,” I then said ; “ at least I should think so ; you seem so very young to be his child ? ”

“ Yes, he was many years older. But he had been very kind to her family during the troubles in her country, and they were all so fond of him ; and though not young, he was still so handsome they have told me, and loved her so very much.”

“ Ah ! then I don’t wonder at her marrying him. I could marry any one that loved me much.”

“ That is saying a great deal,” she observed, with rather a heightened colour.

“ Oh ! I mean, of course, any one that I loved too.”

“ Why, yes ; so, I suppose, could any one.”

“Yes, I suppose so,” I said ; rather confused at finding that I was putting forth inevitable truisms as original discoveries ; and troubled still more at perceiving the quiet suppression of a half-smile on my companion’s sweet, hilarious countenance.

I was not easily daunted ; but I cannot say how completely that little half-smile upset me. I should not have minded it near so much if she had laughed openly ; but the consideration which she in her kindness showed for my feelings, hurt them all the more, and vexed me unreasonably.

Oh ! how often did that same touchiness of temper which I then chose, as so many others do, to dignify by the name of sensitiveness and delicacy of feeling—how often did it afterwards grieve and wound that gentle, playful being, whose own blessed temper was ever as far from taking, as from giving offence !

I sat silent, half-confused, half-angry, till the striking of one of the church clocks reminded me that the time allowed for staying on shore was fast passing away. I had other things to do before returning on board, but I could not

bear to go with an unpleasant feeling on my mind. I strove for something to say, but could find nothing. At last, to my great relief, she asked :

“Do you go soon from this place ?” looking rather sadly at me.

“I do not know ; we may be off to-morrow, or we may stay a month. It all depends on the good pleasure of our Captain.”

A sudden flush of colour on her cheek, as I said this, recalled in an instant all the suspicions I had formed concerning her and him. They had never once occurred to me before, during my visit ; but now they pressed so thickly on my mind, that my breath came quick and short ; and by one of those flashes of thought, which throw a sudden light on past things, which have been unobserved at the moment, I immediately connected his idea with the little start and change of colour I had observed on my first entrance into the garden. I resolved instantly to ascertain the state of the case ; though the bare thought of mentioning it threw me into such an agitation that I trembled all over. I had no genius

for diplomacy; and the only way that ever suggested itself to my mind of finding out a thing was asking about it, so I said:

"There is one thing that I want very much to ask you, if I may."

"What is it?" she said, with a quickness which yet suited well with her childlike simplicity of manner.

"It is: why did you start, and change colour, and look frightened, when you first saw me here in this garden?"

"I did not know that I did change colour, and look frightened," she replied, the blood again flushing her cheeks; "though I remember starting."

"But why did you do that?"

"I only saw the colour of your uniform at first, and I thought it was your Captain."

"And why should you start at seeing him? Don't you like him?"

My breath came quite cold through my lips as I listened for her reply; but not very long had I to wait, for she answered quickly:

"No, I do not like him much."

"Thank God!" I exclaimed, drawing a long breath of relief.

"Why?" she asked, looking at me in amazement.

"Oh, I don't know; only I felt that your liking him, would have made me very miserable."

"Is he then so bad a man?"

"Oh no! not exactly bad; but we don't like him very much on board. But why don't you like him?"

"Oh, for nothing particular; but I don't like his conversation, or manner. I always feel frightened when I am with him, though I really don't know why."

"Does he come here often then?"

"No, I have only seen him here once; but he has come several times to a friend's, where I often spend my mornings."

"And you are sure you don't like him?"

"Quite sure."

"Then I don't care if he likes you ever so much; for he does like you, doesn't he?"

"I think he does a little," she replied; "and sometimes that frightens me. But I ought not to have said this perhaps, so I beg you, very much, do not repeat it to any one. I am sure you will not."

“Not for worlds,” I replied; my heart bounding with happiness at what she had told me; and touched to the quick too, by the confidence she had shown me. Her colour had become much higher from the little excitement of this conversation; and when she raised her eyes with grateful kindness to mine, I thought I had never—and I never had—seen anything so beautiful.

As I assured her that, “not for worlds would I repeat what she had said,” I involuntarily held out my hand, half in pledge of my truth, and half in—I know not what—of feeling towards her. She rose, seemingly not liking to understand my action but as a farewell; yet her countenance showed that she felt it was not meant for that. With some emotion she said:

“We shall, perhaps, see you again before you go; but if not—remember that you saved us, and that—we are grateful.”

“If I may come again,” I replied, much moved, “I shall most joyfully do so.”

“Come again!” exclaimed the old General, starting up, suddenly awakened by our rising;

“oh ! to be sure, whenever you like ; we shall always be delighted to see you.”

Thanking him most sincerely for his cordial words, and shaking hands with them both, I then took my leave ; joyful, oh ! how joyful, at having found the bright image of my imagination more than answered by the brighter reality, and gratified and enchanted beyond words, at the gracious reception I had met with.

## CHAPTER III.

That I have loved—that I have known the love,  
Which troubles in the soul the tearful springs,  
Yet with a colouring halo from above,  
Tinges and glorifies all earthly things;  
Whate'er its anguish or its woe may be,  
Still weaving links for intercourse with thee,  
I bless thee, O my God!

That by the passion of its deep distress,  
And by the o'erflowing of its mighty prayer,  
And by the yearning of its tenderness,  
Too full for words upon their stream to bear,  
I have been drawn still nearer to thy shrine,  
Well-spring of love, th' unfathomed, the Divine!  
I bless thee, O my God!

MRS. HEMANS.

Dependance is his strength, and behold! he prayeth.  
—PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

CAPTAIN NORMANTON continued frequently  
to go on shore; and emboldened by my late

success, I asked to do so also several times ; and getting leave, paid regular visits, of course, at General Sydney's. Each time that I saw Miss Sydney, I felt more for her than before ; but as my visits were often, as it would so happen, paid at an earlier hour of the day than on the first occasion, General Sydney was always awake, and alive ; which, though he was clever and agreeable, and had much to say, did not please me so well as being able to talk to his daughter alone. I tried therefore to make my next trip on shore at a later period of the day ; and happily succeeded.

On arriving at the house, I found them sitting as usual in the garden ; and was rejoiced to see that the old man was again sleeping in his chair.

"Do not wake him for me," I said to his daughter, as she was about to rouse him ; "it is such a pity to disturb his rest."

"It is," she replied ; and she quietly sat down again, and took up her work.

I sat down too ; but of all the thousand topics that the world contains, not one could I find to touch upon ; and I began to fear that this longed-for visit would pass away without any of the pleasure I had promised myself in it.

After some little time, however, Miss Sydney said :

“ Is not your vessel staying here longer than you at first expected ? ”

“ Yes,” I replied. “ You will remember that when you asked me, on my first visit, about the length of our stay, I told you that it all depended on the good pleasure of our Captain. It seems now, that his good pleasure is that we should remain, for which I am not disposed to quarrel with him ; though you probably, Miss Sydney, know better than any of us what keeps him here.”

She did not answer directly, but her colour rose, and continued mounting higher and higher. But after a few moments she raised her eyes, in which there was an expression of trouble, and somewhat of displeasure, and replied :

“ I once foolishly answered a question, Mr. St. Clair, which you asked me, concerning Captain Normanton ; but I do not like to hear his feelings spoken of lightly, even if they are not returned.”

“ *If* they are not returned ! ” I exclaimed, with bitterness ; “ is there then a doubt in the case, Miss Sydney—are you so much changed ? ”

“No,” she replied, raising again her softened eyes, “I can never change; but I have learnt to feel for him more than I did; and am often unhappy about him now. But I am afraid I spoke too angrily.”

“No, you did not,” I replied, “the fault was all mine. I ought not to have spoken so lightly; for I can well feel what it must be not to be loved by you.—Miss Sydney,” I continued, with sudden and violent impulse, “you do not love Captain Normanton; but you must—you must love me—for I love you so very much! so very much!”

She seemed excessively startled by my sudden avowal; and I confess I was myself terrified the moment after, at the audacity and precipitation with which I had made it. She sat silent—evidently could not speak.

“Will you not answer me?” I said, after waiting a moment in mortal fear; “will you not give me a hope that you will return my love?”

“I have thought of you and of your kindness so often,” she replied, gently, “that, next to my father, there is none I do like so much as you.”

I was deeply touched by so undeserved an answer, made in the simple truth of her beautiful nature ; and was too happy to be vexed, even at the reservation she had made ; loving her indeed the better for that sweet constancy of mind which would not let her give up one, who had been all to her for so long, for me, the acquaintance of a day.

“ And will you then marry me, Miss Sydney,” I said, in an almost inarticulate tone, “ when we are old enough ?”

“ If my father will let me, I will,” she replied, earnestly and solemnly.

She rose, and stooped over him again, to try and awaken him ; but his sleep was sound, and she could not rouse him by her gentle efforts.

“ Don't disturb him,” I said ; “ I shall, please God, see you and him again, and then I will ask his consent. I hope I have not done wrong, Miss Sydney, in speaking as I have ; I did not mean it when I came here, but somehow I could not help it.”

“ No, you have not done wrong,” she replied, raising her large eyes, full of feeling, to mine ; “ I have only promised in case of his consent ; and

if he gives it, we know it will be right. Good-bye now," and she held out her hand to me,

"Good-bye," I said. "You have been very kind to me; much kinder than I deserve, or could have thought possible; but I hope I shall never be unworthy of it. I am sure I shall never cease to love you. But—before I go, will you give me something to keep for your sake?—anything."

She thought for a moment; then turned to the little table which stood by with her work, and gave me a letter-case of her own embroidery. She had been working it, she said, for her father, but would do him another. I took it; and it has never left me from that hour.

I rushed down to the shore, having hurriedly got over a few other things I had to do; and finding my men ready, pushed off directly, and arrived at the ship's side just in time not to be too late.

Captain Normanton happened to be on deck as I mounted the side, so could not avoid seeing my arrival. I observed a cloud pass over his face; but in a voice which I think he tried to make kind, he said:

"You are back in good time to-day, Mr. St. Clair."

"Barely, I am afraid, Sir."

"Have you ordered the case, and told the man about the desk?" he asked, speaking of things which he had commissioned me to do for him.

"Yes, Sir."

"Thank you," he said; then remained standing, as if he had something else to say; but nothing seeming to occur, he again said: "Thank you," and walked away.

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Captain Normanton was a handsome man; but the workings of an imperious temper spoiled his countenance. I was, however, at that moment in such a state of happiness, that everything was beautiful in my eyes; and I set about my various duties, wearisome as they often were, as if they had been the chosen joys of my heart. I longed though for my night-watch, that I might, without interruption, think over again the events of the day, hoping for as much happiness in their recollection, as I had had at the moment of their occurrence.

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That blessed night-watch came at last ; such a night as one often has in those delightful climates—warm, soft, and starry ; and if ever there was a happy being on earth or sea, it was I, as I mounted the companion that night, and came up into the fresh, balmy air, preparing for my solitary paces up and down.

Oh ! even now, I can look back upon that hour, and bless God who, even as to earthly things, “ giveth such gifts unto men,” such gifts of pure, warm, heartfelt happiness !—gives them, too, in His most tender love to those who regard Him not ; who, receiving them with eager hands, yet pause not to inquire what heart of love it was which prepared them for them, and chose them with so great a care !

I was not disappointed in thinking that the retrospect of what had passed would bring happiness to my heart. It did so, unspeakably ! When we are the busy actors in a scene where the great interests of our lives are concerned, we are too anxious and nervous—uncertain as we are as to the result—to be able to enjoy the course of the stream which sweeps us on with such whirling rapidity ; and though at last we

may be safely landed on a happy shore, and the object of our desire placed within our grasp, yet the struggle and the striving have left our spirits so excited, that though we may feel joy, yet it can hardly claim to be called happiness. But when, in the calm of our stilled hearts, we again float down in memory the same stream of events, we can then with delight revisit each little sunny eddy, bright with a thousand joys, and each nook where we *know* the flowers grow, though we passed them almost unheeded before; for the blessed result being known, we can afford to linger by the way, and gather all the sweets which lie scattered on its happy course.

Unspeakable indeed was the happiness I enjoyed that night ! Yet, after a time, in recalling all that passed, I began to tremble at what I had done. Not that one misgiving for an instant crossed my mind, as to my own blessed share in the compact into which Mary Sydney and I had entered ; but I began to feel, for the first time, how utterly unworthy I was of her. “ What was I that I should think myself fit to be entrusted with her happiness ? Whose happiness had I ever sought before in life ? What

motive of action had I ever had, but my own most wilful will?"

These thoughts thronged thickly upon me, and oppressed my mind with a weight I had never experienced before. It was the first time that I had ever really considered that I was a responsible being ; and that responsibility, involving, as it now did, the happiness of another, filled me with alarm and self-condemning fears. I had, I thank God, been preserved from much of the vice with which I was but too continually surrounded ; but still I was wholly thoughtless, and careless of every principle ; and what there might happen to be in me of good, was purely the result of accident,—as people call it. But now I felt the most earnest desire to become worthy of her who loved me ; and from my inmost soul, I prayed to God to help me, and to teach me what I should be, and what I should do.

It was the first time I had ever *prayed* in my life ; though as a child I had been taught to *say* my prayers ; and though there was no distinct wish of pleasing God mixed with my desires for improvement, yet I cannot doubt but that my

prayer was heard; and that this sense of my utter helplessness was a lesson—the first—I was receiving from His gracious teaching; and if I went below again that night a less light-hearted being than I had mounted on deck, I was certainly a more thoughtful, and, I think, a better one.

## CHAPTER IV.

Light as the angel-shapes that bless  
An infant's dream!

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A soul too, more than half divine ;  
Where, through some shades of earthly feeling,  
Religion's softened glories shine,  
Like light through summer-foliage stealing ;  
Shedding a glow of such mild hue,  
So warm, and yet so shadowy too,  
As makes the very darkness there,  
More beautiful than light elsewhere.

LALLA ROOKH.

Oh ! be sure,  
Beauty less triumphs in a world of slaves,  
Than in one heart she raises and reclaims.

WESTLAND MARSTON.

THE next day Captain Normanton went again on shore ; and for many succeeding days.

There was no sign of our going away ; and surmises, and surprises, went on all around. I of course, neither surmised, nor was surprised ; I knew well the cause of our detention, and did not marvel at it ; nor repine !

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I can look back to that time with deep thankfulness of heart ; for, from the moment of my ascertaining Miss Sydney's feelings towards me, and also towards Captain Normanton, not one unkind thought respecting him ever crossed my breast. In feeling my great gain, I could but feel his great loss ; and from my very soul I felt for him. I took his part whenever I heard him abused, and often got laughed at for my sudden change of tone towards him ; for at first, after the affair of the fire, I was loud in my abuse of him, and did not attempt to conceal my dislike.

All my consideration for him, however, could not prevent my longing impatiently to go on shore again ; and I soon obtained leave to do so ; and a very few minutes after my boat had touched land, I found myself again in the little

street, and at the door of the little house ; and looking over the way, again saw the little barber in his shop, who, on recognizing me, sprang, as at the first time, across the street at a bound, exclaiming, in answer as it were, to the bell that I had rung :

“ Sono a casa ; si, si, sono a casa.”

We exchanged animated salutations ; half of his, however, being sent after me down the dear old damp passage ; for not a moment did I lose when the door was opened ; but rushed in as if the house had been my own, and I was sure of finding myself at home.

Miss Sydney was not in the garden as usual, only her father. He did not see me at first, so I had leisure to observe him more than I had ever chanced to do before. He was thinner than anything I had ever seen—all joints and angles ; yet without the slightest appearance of ill health. His hair was very grey ; but his hawk-like eye, and well-cut features, fully bore out the account of the past beauty, which had helped to win for him the heart of his young bride. He was wholly unlike his child, however ; for her beauty was more that of her mother’s land. Her slight figure was perfect

grace ; her soft, long-cut eye was fringed with dark lashes ; and her pale cheek was less white than her lovely brow, only when feeling sent the blood up to it in a flush of more than mortal beauty.

After studying the old man for a moment, I descended the steps of the terrace ; but with far different feelings from those which had agitated me on my first visit there. Then all had been a sort of vague tumult within me, more of expectation than of real feeling ; and had Mary Sydney that day disappointed my hope as to what I had pictured her, I should probably have walked up those terrace-steps again with a heart as tranquil and as “fancy-free,” as that which I had carried within me when I used to pace up and down in my mother’s garden at home. But finding her all, and more than all, my fancy had imaged forth, and loving her as such a being deserved to be loved, I now stood again in that garden, and in the presence of that old man, with feelings like those of a criminal whose hopes and fears were hovering between life and death.

Though I had had misgivings before, yet never till that moment had I fully felt the

presumption of what I had done ; never fully felt the immeasurable distance between myself—well born certainly, but poor, and thoughtless, and unpolished—and that rich and beautiful girl,—child almost, but with all the refinement and gentle grace of womanhood ! How I dreaded meeting the glance of that old man's keen eye ; and worlds would I have given to have sunk into the earth ere I was forced to hear the withering words of scorn and rejection which I felt sure he was going to speak. I stood for a moment incapable of seeing or hearing anything distinctly ; but I was soon relieved ; for, perceiving me, he instantly rose from his chair ; and advancing towards me with a grave, but kind countenance, held out his hand, and said he was glad to see me. The revulsion in my feelings was so great, that I could only answer by a sailor's grasp of the hand, which made the old man draw his back with a smile, as he led the way to the shelter of the trees, and with the polished manner of the *vieille cour*, offered me a chair.

We talked a little on indifferent subjects ; but he soon began upon that which was occupying all my thoughts, and spoke with equal good

sense and kindness. He told me that his daughter had informed him of what had passed at my last visit, and had asked him for his sanction to our engagement. He said that under ordinary circumstances he should have refused to listen to anything of the kind between "children like us;" but that bound as he was by ties of the deepest gratitude to me, he could not treat me as he would have done another; that he had therefore made all possible inquiries concerning me,—my conduct and character, &c.; and finding that all the accounts he received were, he was pleased to say, in my favour, he had determined to give our attachment a fair trial; and that if our minds remained the same till I was of age,—at which time his daughter would be nearly nineteen,—he would then consent to an engagement between us, which might end in marriage whenever circumstances admitted of it. He then spoke most kindly of what he called his obligations to me, and added, that he had no doubt that the remembrance of them had influenced his daughter very much in the answer she had given to my proposal.

I was much hurt at this; and replied, rather indignantly, that if I thought *that*, I should

desire instantly to release her from her engagement; for that my love was far too earnest and too true, to be satisfied with anything but love in return.

He begged my pardon with a smile, and said he was sorry to have hurt my feelings, which he was far from intending; that he could well imagine that it was pleasanter for me to think that it was for myself, and not for my deeds that I was accepted, and sincerely trusted that it was so.

“But here she comes,” he added, gaily; “so you may ask her herself.”

“No,” I said hurriedly, lowering my voice; “I need not *ask*, I shall soon *feel* which it is.”

Though I knew she was coming, I could not turn to greet her, my mind was so disturbed; and when at last my eye did meet hers, there was so much of trouble in it, that, as she told me afterwards, her heart sank within her, thinking that something unpleasant had occurred between me and her father. This gave to her countenance so anxious an expression, that I was in a moment reassured; for I felt convinced that mere gratitude could never have produced so much emotion as she showed. A thrill of

joy—so quick in their transition are our feelings !—lighted up my countenance into instant brightness—I felt that it did so ; and hers reflecting its expression, she advanced again towards me,—for in the moment of her terror she had paused with her hand resting for support on a stone vase of flowers, which stood in the midst of the garden.

“ Mary,” said her father, “ I have spoken to Mr. St. Clair, and have told him the same as I told you ; that if, when he comes of age, you are both in the same mind as you are now, and all else concurs to make my consent advisable, I will then give it. Meanwhile, it is not probable that you will meet often, though I shall not deny your doing so ; for I think it but right and reasonable that those who are to judge of each other should learn to know each other ; but circumstances will probably divide you ; Mr. St. Clair having his home upon the waters ; and you, —wherever fate may cast your lot and mine.”

He paused, for his voice faltered ; his daughter stooped down and pressed her lips to his forehead, murmuring lovingly : “ Come what may, never let me leave you, my father !”

She sunk on her knees by his side, and he,

throwing his arms round her neck, cried like a child.

At length raising his head, he held out his hand to me, and said that I must forgive him, for he was a weak old man, shaken in mind and body; that the thought of any change in the fate of his child was trying to him; but that I must not think that his emotion proceeded from any mistrust of me, only from anxiety for her.

I said I know not what, of "watching over her happiness;" I felt it would be but watching over my own!

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Great was my enjoyment that day; and much improvement did I always derive from my conversations with Miss Sydney; for there was a charm in her words which dropped into my heart like dew, and brought forth blossoms of thought and feeling, of whose germ even I had never been conscious before. Not that she then meant to teach, for she was very young, and in the simplicity of her heart knew not that to her a treasure had been committed, unknown to most others; but her thoughts were so purely sweet, her feelings so holy, her mind so elevated,

that one imbibed from them health to one's soul, without knowing scarcely how it came, or what had brought it. Her spirits too were so light and gay, that trouble vanished from the heart almost at sight of her; she was as "sunshine walking through the earth," and clearing away its clouds and mists. Yes!

"Her's was life's enjoyment, offering still  
The tribute of her happiness to Heaven;"

and her bright gratitude, and unyielding faith animated all she did, and gilded every path in life.

Hers was true faith; actual, simple belief in the word and the goodness of God; and when she found, as she soon did, that this was a thing unknown to me, how painful was her surprise! Then, indeed, did she become a teacher intentionally, of my dark soul; and though I was the first on whom her loving zeal expended itself, yet it then grew large and wide; till it urged her gentle but courageous spirit in every way to try and conquer souls for Christ.

"Légitime conquête! où il y a deux vainqueurs, et où il n'y a point de vaincu!"

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Never, perhaps, of mere earthly happiness did I enjoy so cloudless a time as I did then. It was not merely that I was with her whom I loved, but it was the power, new to me, of loving ; —of living out of the narrow bounds of one's own poor, selfish self. I seemed almost to look about me to find new objects to love, so large, though so full, did my heart seem ! To the thought of my mother I turned with an affection I had never even imagined before ; and instead of the almost schoolboy letters I had been used to send her, I now poured forth volumes from out of the full store of my inward heart. I told her, of course, instantly of my conditional engagement, hoping it would meet with her fullest approbation ; and, in the joy of my heart, calling upon her to rejoice with me in my blessed prospects. Conditional indeed, I could not feel it to be ; for unread in the mysteries of the frail human heart, I never dreamt of love like ours fading away, or changing its object. A blissful, an eternal “ now ” seemed stamped upon it !

It was a delight to try and please even the old General, towards whom I felt the greatest gratitude ; and though the captious irritability, which was the first quality I had observed in

him, continually broke forth in our after intercourse, yet it was seldom a difficulty to me at that time to bear with it; nor did it fret my temper, when I found it did not vex his child. The first time indeed that I heard him speak unkindly, as it seemed, to her, I involuntarily started up, and could have annihilated him; but her calm countenance undergoing no change, and her manner of answering being only, if possible, more gentle and affectionate than before, I restrained my wrath, and sat down quietly again. But when he was at some distance from us afterwards, I asked her if she did not feel angry when he spoke to her in that way.

“Angry with my father!” she replied, in astonishment; “no, I have never felt anger towards him in my life. I used to feel unhappy sometimes, when I was very young, if he spoke in that way, for I thought he must mean it unkindly; but now I know he does not; and I feel great pity for him when those moods come on him, for they must fret him like an illness. When he speaks so before strangers indeed, I cannot bear it, fearing they should think ill of him, as they cannot know

the father he is in reality to me; but I did not feel that just now with you, for I could not think of you as a stranger."

The idea of being thus linked in her mind with herself, was inexpressibly delightful to me; and from that hour I tried to think with her, to feel with her, to act with her in all things. But it was, after all, but as a dim shadow, uncertainly following a bright and glorious substance.

## CHAPTER V.

The Lord is swift to hear  
The solitary sighings of distress ;  
The comfort of His presence is so near  
To such as be in pain and heaviness !

UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

Life has spread out a page for me,  
The fairest of her history.

TEGNER.

A FEW visits, I have said, I paid, after that first happy one which had settled my fate, when one day, just as I was about to ask leave to go again on shore, the order was given for sailing. I was, as you may suppose, distracted at the thought of having to go away without seeing Mary again; without being able even to write to her; and with a heavy heart I set about my odious duties. I was thankful, however, to find how far less a degree of irritation now mingled

with my feelings, than did in former times, under contradiction ; and in blessing her for the benign influence she had over me, I felt that to approach nearer to her perfection was an object worthy of any exertion ; and the thought that she would be pleased with me could she see the effort I was making, sweetened that effort so much, that I half forgot my sorrow in the animated use of the new powers which she had called forth within me.

As soon as the bustle of getting under way was over, and I had a moment's leisure, I sat down to write to her. As I did so, and remembered that months—years perhaps—might pass away before we met again, my saddened feelings, which I had kept down for a time with so strong a hand, rose rebelliously against me ; and bitter regrets—the bitterness of a first grief—pressed heavily on my heart. I thought this sudden separation a cruelty ; and murmured against the decrees of God. The influence which the thought of Mary had had over me for a time, though salutary, was but of mortal power, and could not long stand against natural feeling ; but finding my misery increase as my patience diminished, I was driven to the only

source of real peace and strength, and praying, found that my upward appeal, was heard and answered from on high.

Oh ! how often have I found it so ! “ God *waiting* to be gracious !” His

“Winged blessings standing by,  
In act to part.”\*

To me—unworthy as I then was, and ever must be, of the least of all His mercies—to me, even as of old to him who was called “greatly beloved,” the ministering angel might often have said : “At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come ;” for never did I send up a glance, a thought, an inarticulate wish to heaven, but what its golden peace was sent down in answer.

In this case, however, not only was inward peace given, but an immediate relief to my trouble ; for scarcely had I become more composed, than the Captain's coxwain came to me with a letter, which he begged my pardon for not having delivered sooner, saying it had been given him by some gentleman's servant

\* In the hope of disarming criticism, the Author acknowledges to fearful anachronisms in quotations.

just when getting into the boat the last time he came from shore ; but that in the bustle of getting off he had quite forgotten it.

I was too much rejoiced at receiving it at all—for I saw the handwriting was a woman's, and felt sure it was Mary's—to be angry at the delay ; so dismissing him with a kind nod, I tore my letter open in an instant.

No words can describe my astonishment on reading its commencement. Instead of the sorrowful parting lines I had expected, I found expressions of happiness at the prospect of seeing me again so soon, and being so much with me. In bewilderment I raised my eyes as if to question earth, sea, sky, as to what she could mean ; and catching the sound of the rippling waters as they passed rapidly by the ship's side, I sadly felt how little they spoke of near meetings. I then again turned to the letter, fancying she must have been unaware, when she wrote, of my approaching departure. But I soon found that that was not the case ; and with a surprise, equalled only by the trembling joy that seized me, did I read that Captain Normanton, having met her and her father the day before, and hearing the latter say that he had determined

on visiting England the ensuing spring, had offered them a passage on board his ship, which was to take her homeward course about that time.

I could scarcely believe my senses ! *She* was going to England !—going with *me* ! going, too, at a time when, as our ship was to be paid off, I should have perfect liberty to be with her continually ! I could not contain my joy ; I jumped up in an ecstasy, then sat down again, and once more opened and read her letter, with less surprise perhaps, but not less joy, than before.

As I looked up at last, I caught the eye of one of my messmates, who had come in without my hearing him, and who had been watching me, he said, for some time with infinite amusement ; for while I held my letter in one hand, I had it seemed, been gesticulating with the other in a wonderful manner. As soon as he saw he was perceived, he darted forward, and with the agility of a monkey seized my letter, and held it aloft over his head. I rushed upon him, and dragged his arm down with all my strength ; but when just within my reach, he caught the letter in the other hand, and again flourished it on high.

I was furious ; but felt the ridicule of such a chase, so gave it up ; though I stamped on the deck, raved at him, and insisted on his instantly returning it to me. But he, continuing his exulting laugh, told me, “ I should never have it till I told him who it was from ; that if I did not tell him quickly, he should proceed to inform himself by the simple process of looking at the signature ; and that if it promised any amusement, he should read the whole epistle aloud, for the benefit of all the juniors in the ship.”

Knowing that he was perfectly capable of executing his threat—being always bent on mischievous fun, though otherwise the best-natured and kindest-hearted fellow in the world—remembering also that it is generally those who guess your secret, not those who know it, who are the ones to betray you—I thought my best way was to cease the contest, and yield with as good a grace as I could ; so telling him, that if he gave me my letter, I would tell him who it was from, I held out my hand for it, and was not a little rejoiced when I again felt it in my possession.

“ And now,” he said, seating himself close to me, and looking at me with a ludicrous length

and solemnity of face, "my dear fellow! I am all ear, all impatience, all—all sorts of things; so begin—begin."

"I shan't say one word," I replied, "or tell you anything, till you put your face into proper shape again, and sit a little further from me. But seriously, if you wish not to make my keeping my promise most excessively irksome, promise me in your turn, not to repeat a syllable of what I am going to say; and try, will you, not to turn it into ridicule."

"If it is anything really serious, my good fellow, I wouldn't either repeat or ridicule it for the world," he replied; drawing himself a little away, and letting his handsome face become handsome again.

"You are the best fellow in the world," I said; "or I would rather have taken the chance of being knocked on the head in the scuffle, than have promised to tell you a word about it."

He was indeed the "best fellow in the world;" and when I had given him an outline of the case, he entered heart and soul into my feelings; and many a time afterwards did he stand between me and trouble, and help me in a thousand ways.

Not a word, however, of Captain Normanton's liking for Miss Sydney did I breathe. My promise to her could not be forgotten; and even had I not given it, the feeling that I was his successful rival would effectually have sealed my lips. I felt so much for him indeed, that not only could I not have borne to mention the thing myself, but I could not even have endured the idea that others should suspect it. When therefore my companion expressed his surprise at the unwonted civility of the offer made to General Sydney and his daughter, I merely said that the acquaintance having been formed under peculiar and distressful circumstances, and the General being an old man, I did not think there was anything very remarkable in it; but that, however that might be, I of course, was very glad, though I begged him not to say a word on the subject till Captain Normanton himself should mention it.

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On we went, moving majestically before a light breeze, and coasting along Italy's beautiful shores; then round by Sicily, Malta, Greece, &c. Weeks and months passed rapidly by, but still

Captain Normanton spoke not a word. Winter—such winter as is known in those delightful climes—was almost past; and as we neared shore occasionally, we could see the fresh green of the early foliage spreading its mantle over the woods and hills. How lovely it was! and, gilded by the light within my heart, it seemed to me lovelier than to any one besides.

At length there was a stir in the ship. The carpenter was put into requisition, and sundry alterations and improvements were made in the Captain's cabin, &c.; and at last, when the time approached for our return to England, we were ordered to run once more up the Gulf of Genoa, which being so completely out of our course, gave great surprise on board. Still not a word was said of the reason of this proceeding; till as we drew near to Nice, it was at last announced. Great was the surprise expressed; not so much at the circumstance itself, as at the mystery that had so long enveloped it; and suspicion once awakened, a thousand tributary observations and remembrances came pouring in to swell the flood of conjecture; all pointing, of course, to the only probable, and in this instance, true solution of the case.

It was insufferable to me to have the subject mentioned in that way ; to hear that name bandied about from mouth to mouth, which I could almost have wished should never have been breathed but by “ the pure lips of angels only ; ”—to hear it too, coupled jestingly with that of another !

For that other too, as I have said, I felt deeply. I knew that the whole ship’s company thought he was attached to Miss Sydney ; and knew too, that they must all hereafter hear of the failure of his wishes. I felt as if I were wronging him—disgracing, mortifying him ; as if I were the cause of all the contemptuous words which were spoken of him now, and of all the heart-misery which I feared might be his hereafter. I could have done anything for him—endured any treatment at his hands ; and if even his voice was heard, I involuntarily started forward, anxious to perform the least of his wishes. Oh ! could he have read my heart, how differently perhaps would his own have felt towards me ! Could he have known how careful I was of his feelings, he might perhaps have lightened a little the hand which afterwards lay so heavy upon mine !

## CHAPTER VI.

I ask no line—no written line,  
For thy dear hand to fill,  
By which thy absent soul with mine,  
Might commune still.

Dear are such signs to those who fear  
That they can be forgot ;  
And I too own them dear, most dear,  
Yet need them not.

No signs those faithful instincts need,  
By which I feel thee mine ;  
And in my own true heart can read  
The love of thine.

UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

At length the day came, so fraught with  
emotion !

It had been General Sydney's desire that  
nothing should be said of my engagement

to his daughter, till the time arrived when it was to be definitively settled; so that in the eyes of the world, I had no further claim upon her than that of a common acquaintance; except, perhaps, such as my little service to her might be considered as entitling me to. I knew not, therefore, in what manner to accost her on her arrival; and when at last I saw her, assisted by Captain Normanton, mounting the ship's side, I longed to rush away, fearful lest I should betray some of the many tumultuous emotions which swelled within me. But I felt rooted to the spot.

I had written to General Sydney several times during our cruize, but had not received a line from him, not knowing where to tell him to direct his letters. It was not needed however, as far as my reliance on his daughter was concerned, much as I should have delighted in hearing; for no doubt of her constancy could ever have crossed my mind; and had it ever done so, her glowing and agitated recognition of me, as, on ascending the ladder, she chanced to look up, and caught my eye, would have dispelled it in a moment. I no longer wished to fly, for such a deep peace

fell on my heart as completely restored my self-possession.

It was not so with her, however; and trembling and frightened at appearing among so many strangers, she became confused; and her foot slipping as she stepped on deck, she would have fallen, had not my hand caught and saved her. She did not at the first moment see to whom she was indebted for this slight service, and was beginning to thank me as a stranger; when perceiving who it was, she suddenly became silent; but in that eloquent silence what was left unsaid?

Captain Normanton, whose arm she was holding, also started forward to save her, and caught sight of her countenance at the moment of her recognising me. My eye glanced on him, and a look of more mortal agony I never saw. It withered for a moment all my joy; and I felt as if I could have fallen at his feet, and implored his forgiveness for all the ill which I had wrought him. And yet it was not I, for if I had never existed, I feel sure that she would never have liked him; though to see her prefer another must have been misery indeed!

I thought I must speak, so saying a few

words, I left them to pursue their way, and went to help the old General. He was very kind, and pressed my hand with great warmth ; but as I gave him my arm to steady him against the rolling of the ship, I felt that he was very tremulous, and he seemed more shaken than I had ever seen him before. He told me afterwards what a great and painful effort it had been to him to leave Nice, with all its charm of recollections ; and that the needful preparations for his removal had very much harassed and wearied him.

When I had conducted him to the door of the cabin, he begged me to come in ; but seeing the Captain there, I felt I had better not : so returned on deck.

As soon as I got there, Bruce—the shipmate I have mentioned—took my arm, and walked off with me, away from the others.

“Lies the wind in that quarter?” he whispered. “I thought as much, but chose to wait a little before I hazarded my guess. I suspect by this time however, that it is past guessing work with any in the ship.”

“What do you mean?” I asked ; unwilling to corroborate the truth of his suspicions.

“What do I mean, most innocent? Why that our Captain's in love with *your* love, and that you'll have a stout battle to fight for her before you win her; that's what I mean.”

“What makes you think so?”

“*Think* that he is in love with her! I don't think it, I am sure of it; and if I wasn't sure of it, there's his coxwain's sure of it, and Parkins is sure of it, and Smith's sure of it, and Lawson's sure of it, and Saville's sure of it, and—”

“Well, never mind,” I said. But on he went.

“—And Booth is sure of it, and Harris is sure of it, and,” raising his voice higher and higher, the more he saw I wanted to stop him, “Streatfield's sure of it, and Raikes is sure of it, and—”

“There's one on board at least, who is not sure of it,” I said, when at last he stopped, pretending to be out of breath.

“Is there?” he exclaimed; “then all I can say is, that man's a—”

“Thank you,” I replied, laughing at his amiable, implied compliment, and willing he should imagine it was myself I meant; though

in fact it was the General, who I knew was wholly ignorant on the subject.

“But now, Bruce,” I continued, “pray do not go on in this way. You know my secret and hers—not that you won it very fairly either; but you do know it, and I feel sure will keep it. But if you have any regard for the Captain’s, or for our peace whilst we are here, let matters go on as quietly as possible. Draw the attention of the men and the youngsters off as much as you can, and take no more notice of this foolish idea about the Captain. If a word of it were to reach his ear, you may be sure it would be the worse for us all; and true or false, he would be annoyed beyond measure, and naturally too.”

“Oh! I’ll be as discreet as possible,” he said; “mute as a figure-head; delusive as a dolphin! But now I must tell you a piece of news: —she’s very beautiful!”

“I am glad you think so,” I replied; “though of course you could not think otherwise. Yes, she is beautiful!”

“And rich?”

“I believe so.”

“You’re a pretty fortunate fellow, I think! I only wish the chance had been mine.”

Some contemptuous reply was just on my lips, when looking into his fine face, and knowing what a good fellow he was, I could only exclaim with a smile :

“I am very glad it wasn't. I should have stood but a poor chance after you.”

“Well now, that's a very pretty compliment,” he said, “very—and very handsome of you to make it; so now I'm your friend for life. Not a very old bird you see, to be caught by such chaff.”

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He was indeed a friend to me ! in after times, oh, how great a friend ! But many also were the services he did me during that trying, but happy—torturing, but delightful passage home ; not only as to procuring me many a quiet moment with Mary—for which, in his kindness, he was ever on the watch—but also, in diverting attention from us, and from Captain Normanton also ; which last I cared for almost more than the first. Not that it was possible that any part of the affair could remain much of a secret ; a ship's crew has too little to divert or interest it, for the arrival on

board of such a being as Mary to be a matter of indifference. She could not come on deck but what all eyes were turned on her; and there was not one among us, from the Captain to the powder-monkey, who would not have gone bare-headed and bare-footed, day or night to have done her the slightest service.

But still Bruce, from being a general favourite, and one moreover, who did not mind using—though always well—the power he felt he had over the others, stood in the gap in a thousand instances. “Of course the Captain must do this,” and “of course he must do that. Wasn’t it his own ship? and mustn’t he do the honours?” And “of course St. Clair has a right to speak to them;” and “of course he has a right to be with them! Didn’t he save their lives?”

This, which I overheard continually, kept the others tolerably quiet; for they none of them liked to come within reach of his contemptuous “of courses.”

## CHAPTER VII.

The very pleasure of our earthly pleasures, the very affection of our earthly affections, makes the heart quiver with their touch.—C. L.

There can be no entire satisfaction for our affections in any created thing. Just as far, indeed, as we seek God in them, earthly affections do become a rest for our spirits; but they can never satisfy all our need. No human sympathy can be perfect; it cannot come close enough to us, it cannot reach the centre of our being. There are inner, deeper tones in our souls, of which we are at times painfully conscious, to which nothing of the earth can perfectly respond. God has wrought these wonderful powers into our nature, that we might be capable of communion with Him; and might be driven to Him, by finding short of Him no perfect rest, no true law of perfection. There are deep wants in our nature that none but He can satisfy.—WILBERFORCE'S SERMONS.

It was beautiful weather when we set sail on our way homewards; and on the evening of the

day of their embarkation, General Sydney and his daughter came up on deck with the Captain, and one or two of the officers whom he had invited to dine with them. I did not like to join them, so contented myself with walking occasionally near enough to catch Mary's eye, and once or twice to hazard a whispered word if the Captain was not near.

She was standing at one time looking towards the receding shores of her native land, and I saw that she was crying. It was very natural, but I could not bear her tears. She did not see that I was near; and as the others were talking together on the quarter-deck, I quietly breathed her name. She started, and seeing me, strove to hide her tears.

"You are grieved to leave your own country," I whispered; "but you are going to mine."

"And mine, too," she replied.

Then seeing her father coming towards us with rather unsteady steps, she went to meet him; and taking his arm, she led him to where I was standing; and under his sanction we stayed and talked together for some minutes; but seeing the Captain, who had been examining something through his glass, turn round to

look for them, I took my leave, dreading alike to incur his displeasure and to wound his feelings.

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The ship made but little way for several days, for there was scarcely a breath of wind ; and during that time I had many moments of great enjoyment. Mary remained but little below, frequently coming up with her father, and walking about, induced by one or other of the officers to examine different parts of the ship. For such occasions, when the Captain was not there, Bruce was ever on the watch ; he being, in fact, among the foremost in creating them ; and if I was not on deck when they occurred, he somehow or other always contrived to let me know ; and thus I had many opportunities for conversation with Mary ; broken and interrupted indeed, but still, as may be imagined, delightful to me.

As she had her pianoforte on board, she agreed, when she was not on deck, to carry on a little intercourse with me through the medium of music, in her talent for which delightful art, as well as for painting and many other accomplishments, her Italian origin showed itself very

distinctly. I had heard her sing many beautiful things ; and having got from her a list of them, she let me select such as I wished her to sing each day ; and as I heard her soft, but powerful voice rising from beneath, or running through the cabins between the decks, I felt that she was speaking to me ; her spirit with mine, as mine was with hers ; and though shut from each other's sight, we were together in heart.

One evening we were on deck, when the sun had given place to the light of the glorious moon which, though not then at the full, yet completely justified the well-known boast of the Neapolitan Ambassador to one of our ministers : "*La lune du roi mon maître, vaut bien votre soleil ;*" and as its yellow beams lay on the waters at the ship's side, broken into myriads of sparkles, it seemed as if I had never thought it beautiful before.

We were making Port Mahon, and hove-to there. The whole thing was so lovely ! The bright heavens, the reflection of the lights from the shore, and the calm outline of the isle itself, as it

" Basked in the night-beam beauteously,  
And the blue waters slept in smiles."

I had been invited by the Captain to dinner that day ; and when we went up afterwards on deck, he was happily busy giving some orders elsewhere.

It was generally at such quiet times as these, that the beauty of Mary's pious mind showed itself the most delightfully ; but this evening she seemed buried in her own thoughts. In general, if she spoke to me of the things of God, I could scarcely answer her a word ; but now as the beauty of that scene, and the joy of having her to look on it with me, pressed on my heart almost to sadness, I felt a longing to hear her speak of what alone could take that aching pain away. Her holy feelings had always soothed me ; and truly could I have said to her at such times in the words of another : "*Quand vous parlez, c'est comme de la musique !*" I listened for her to speak, but she remained silent.

At last, weighed down by the oppression of my overfull heart, I dropped my head on my arms as they rested against the ship's side, and murmured forth :

"Speak to me of God, Mary."

She did not answer me for a moment, save

by laying her trembling hand on my arm ; but then she said :

“ He is speaking to you Himself, Wilfred.”

“ But He has spoken to me so often by you, Mary ! Let Him do so again now, for my heart is heavy !”

“ Why should it be so ?”

“ I don’t know, unless it is that I have more happiness than I deserve, or know how to be grateful for.”

“ Perhaps it is because it is only the happiness of this world. Join to it the brighter thought of God’s heaven, and it will not oppress your heart, I think. I am so sorry that it does, for I have been so very happy !”

“ Do you always think of God when you are happy, Mary ?”

“ I don’t know ; but I always feel that the joys of life are foretastes of what the joys of heaven must be.”

“ Your’s is a happy life then ! And why should not mine be so too ? Why, when I have everything to make me happy—happier than ever I was in my life before—should I feel so—almost miserable ?”

“ I do not know, unless, as I said before, it is

because it is this world's happiness only. *That* we know must perish and pass away, so it has sadness often with it; but God's joys increase till they are perfect. It is His love which gives us all good things; and that thought makes them doubly dear. In loving you, Wilfred, my heart perpetually springs up to God with a love I never felt before, because He has made me so happy."

My heart was full—full of her sweet words, and somewhat too of the love of God, which seemed at that moment to mingle itself with my exceeding love for her. I raised my head and looked at her, and the load passed away from my heart.

"I too, will bless God for His gifts," I said; "for who has such cause as I? It is strange that He should give such blessings to me, who never in my life thought of Him till you made me do so."

"God did that Himself, Wilfred, not I."

"You seem always to have Him in your thoughts, Mary."

"I wish I had," she exclaimed, with such a look. "Is it not delightful to have one's heart in heaven, and heaven in one's heart?"

“Did you always feel these things as you do now?”

“I never felt otherwise; though of course, in growing older, I feel and learn continually more. But my mother taught me to think of them when I could think at all, so I cannot trace their first beginnings in my heart.”

“Your mother! was she not a Roman Catholic?”

“When she married, yes; but when they went to Nice, out of love to my father she would go with him to church as well as to her own service; and Nice has generally been blessed with good English ministers. One of these was the means of her conversion.”

“By showing her the errors of her own faith?”

“No; I don’t think he ever tried to do that—at least, not unless she asked him; but he showed her the truth, and then of course the error fell away. I have heard him say—for he lived long there—that there was no use in emptying a mind of an error unless you put a truth in its place; he thought that that was what made so many Roman Catholics become infidels. Either from their own minds, or the

arguments of others, they saw what was not true in their faith; and then knowing nothing better, they learnt to disbelieve everything. He used to say that was the meaning of the parable about the evil spirit going out of a house and leaving it empty; you know which I mean."

"Yes, when more evil spirits came in, and the last state of that man was worse than the first."

"Yes, for he said, any faith, any belief in Christ, however imperfect, was better than none—a wholesomer state for the mind, and might lead to the truth. It signified little, he used to say, by what name men perished, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic—and all must do so, whose *hearts* were not converted—turned quite to God; so he spoke to all alike; and God blessed him very greatly to those of both religions. He spoke so strongly but so kindly—all loved him."

"And your father, Mary, does he feel with you? Surely not."

Her colour rose painfully, and she looked away as she said:

"I have hoped so. He went in everything with my mother; but since then I

can hardly say, though still I think he wishes for the truth. And I have prayed so much for him; and I can see no reason why God should not answer my prayers. He is not all that my mother was; yet to him I owe many good thoughts, and I love to feel that I do so. What happiness it will be when I meet my sweet mother in heaven, and am able to thank her for all she has done for me—and him too. Is it not Newton who says: ‘The Christian will look back throughout eternity with interest and delight on the steps and means of his conversion.’ ‘My father told me this—my mother told me that.’ ‘Such an event was sanctified to me—in such a place God visited my soul.’ I have often thought of that. I like to feel that heaven is a continuation of earth, and not a quite fresh, new thing; that seems so cold to the heart.”

“I suppose it is the idea that it was an end of all things here, that has always made the thought of death such a shuddering thing to me. To leave all I have loved, to forget it, to lose sight of this beautiful world, with all its pleasant things and blessed memories, this chills my very heart to think of; and I fear I do not as yet

value what I shall go to, sufficiently to make me part from what I shall leave, without a pang."

"It is not parting, Wilfred, it is not parting; it is getting more in addition. Heaven cannot be as a walled garden, out of which we are not to move. All the universe will be ours to range in and enjoy; and why should we suppose that earth alone—our own dear, dear earth!—should be the only spot from which we are to be exiled? When the 'outgoings of the morning and the evening praise God,' why should we not be there, even as now our voices may be allowed perhaps to join the fervent, loving song of those already before the throne? The church of Christ is all one, Wilfred, whether journeying here, or at home there."

"That is the most cheerful view, I have ever heard taken of it," I said. "Generally, people speak of death, as if it were the darkest, dreariest thing in creation; or at best, a long, dreamless sleep, before being admitted to heaven; and that cold sleep sounds so chilly."

"The body sleeps, but not we—we are with God; and have celestial bodies."

"But it says our bodies are to be raised again, and we to inhabit them again."

“I know it is said so, and so therefore it must be; but St. Paul speaks of being ‘unclothed’ of our present bodies, and immediately ‘clothed upon’ by heavenly ones. And Moses and Elias had bodies—visible appearances of some kind; or the apostles could not have seen, and recognised them, when with our Lord.”

“That recognising them, how wonderful! Men, whom they had never seen!”

“The Almighty Spirit of course told them who they were. And think of us, Wilfred—you and I, poor, frail things as we seem in comparison—think of our seeing, and conversing with those holy beings. Oh! what are we, gracious, gracious Lord! that we should be admitted among such; admitted—more than all—to see Thee ‘face to face!’ Oh, Wilfred! does not the very thought thrill through the heart and soul?”

“I don’t know what it makes me feel—it seems overpowering—so great, so high! And then that we can sin against God, and be vexed by passing things!”

At that moment a step approached; it was Captain Normanton; and what a comment on what I had just been saying, was the revulsion of

feeling caused by his presence ! How, in a moment, was heaven, with all its heavenly things, expelled from my mind ; and earth's poor troubles, and vexing irritations again established there. Mary, too, seemed to participate somewhat in my feelings ; for she moved a little from me, and spoke to her father, who was sitting near.

The moon had now quite disappeared ; but her hidden lamp still shed a soft and misty light around the spot where she had sunk.

"Are you not afraid of staying out so late, Miss Sydney ?" said Captain Normanton, in a voice which showed he was trying to restrain some unpleasant feeling.

"It has been so very warm," she replied, "that I thought there was no danger ; but perhaps it is getting rather late."

"But as you are here, perhaps you will not mind staying a little longer, as I have been detained from you so long," he said ; as he saw her draw her shawl around her, and seem preparing to depart.

"I—do not mind," she answered, seeming to hesitate between her fear of encouraging, and her fear of offending him ; "but it does I think get a little cold."

“Will you have another shawl?” he said. “Mr. St. Clair I am sure will be good enough to ask for one.”

“Certainly, Sir,” I replied; amused at his authoritative mode of getting his own way, whether she wished it or not.

I ran down, and soon reappeared with a shawl, which I was holding out for her to put on, when, taking it from me, he said, rather quickly :

“Thank you. Good night.”

I was excessively annoyed : but I went to take leave of General Sydney, and then wished Mary good night. She held out her hand to me; and even by that faint light, I could see the sweetness of her look, as if she wished to make up to me for any pain I might have to bear on her account.

An impatient gesture from Captain Norman-ton prevented my lingering as I would fain have done; and full of wrath, yet with the blest consciousness of being beloved, I withdrew to my hammock; and had not been there long, ere to my malicious satisfaction I heard Mary’s light footstep enter her cabin.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Sweet ideals feed the soul, thoughts of loveliness  
delight it ;

The chivalrous affection of uncalculating youth  
lacketh not honourable wisdom.

Charge not folly on invisibles that render thee  
happier and purer ;

The fair frail visions of romance have a use beyond  
the maxims of the real.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

Human love can do no more than this : sacrifice  
all for what it loves, and leave the issues to a higher  
power.—ELLEN PICKERING.

Oh ! who hath loved, nor known  
Affection's power exalt the bosom all its own.

MRS. HEMANS.

SORRY as I was for Captain Normanton, a  
new source of anxiety soon arose, infinitely more  
painful to me. Bruce had been, as I have said,

most kind in procuring for me opportunities of being with Mary; and at first he would often be with us, when we went about the ship; and his spirits being as high as mine, we were certainly a most joyous party. But after a time, though ever faithful in summoning me, he would always make some excuse for absenting himself. Selfishly full of my own happiness, I had not noticed this, till Mary said to me one day:

“Why does not Mr. Bruce ever come with us now? I miss his joyful laugh, and like him so much better than any of the others.”

“I didn’t observe that he was not with us,” I answered; as a slight feeling of jealousy passed my mind (for, as I have told you, my wayward temper often troubled her). “His absence seems to make more impression on you than on me.”

She smiled; but her smile had so much of pain mingled with it, that I was sorely ashamed of myself.

“I will go and see for him,” I said.

She smiled again, and this time there was no pain in her sweet look; and wondering that she could be so kind to one so unworthy of her love, yet full of happiness, I bounded along the deck,

and in a moment had dived down into the lower regions.

I found Bruce alone in the berth, sitting with his elbows on his knees, and his face buried in his hands.

"Bruce," I cried, "what are you doing here? Why don't you come up to us?"

He had looked up sideways on hearing my step; but then relapsed into his former attitude. He made no answer.

"Why don't you come up?" I repeated.

Still no answer.

"Bruce," I said in astonishment, "what is the matter with you?" And I went up and laid my hand on his shoulder.

"Go away, can't you," he said, shaking my hand off, yet without raising his head.

"Yes, I can," I replied; "but I don't choose to, till you come with me."

"Then you may stay," he growled; "for I am not coming."

"But we want you."

"Not a bit of it!"

"We do, I tell you. Miss Sydney sent me to say she wanted you."

"Did she?" And he raised his head sud-

denly ; then dropping it again, murmured : “ No, she didn’t.”

“ She did, I tell you !”

“ She didn’t, I tell you !”

“ I tell you, she did ! Come don’t be obstinate, and so very lazy ; get up, and come. She wants to hear your joyous laugh again, she says.”

“ I dare say she does,” he replied, with a little taunt in his tone ; “ but I’m not going to laugh for hers or anybody’s amusement. So you may say I shan’t come, or *can’t* come ; I suppose that would be civilest.”

“ Why can’t you come ? What’s the matter with you ?”

“ My grandfather’s dead.”

“ But your grandfather’s been dead these ten years ; so that won’t do.”

“ I didn’t say when he died ; I only said he was dead—and so he is.”

“ Bruce, are you gone mad ?”

“ I don’t know, and I don’t care much,” he replied ; his pretended crossness giving place to a tone of real sadness.

The pang that shot through me, as a suspicion of the truth all of a sudden flashed on

my mind, I cannot describe. If there was a being in the world I loved, next to Mary, it was Bruce; if there was one, in the way of whose happiness I would not for worlds have stood, it was he. Yet here, all of a sudden, I found myself, as I thought, between him and his best wishes—him and his love! I stood looking at him in consternation for a minute; then, incapable of saying another word, I left the berth.

I felt my mind in such disorder that I could not immediately return on deck; and while I was lingering below, I heard Mary's voice in conversation with the Captain, so knew it was in vain for me to go up then; and for once in my life I was glad of an excuse for not joining her.

I sat down at the foot of the companion and tried to arrange my thoughts. I was always rather given to day-dreams; things which, if often of dangerous tendency, are not always without their use;—at least I have found it so. In my reveries I had often liked to fancy myself in such and such situations, and to think what would be my feelings, and course of action under them. Amongst other things I had tried to

fancy what I should do, if ever I found Mary liking any one better than me; or if I saw any one liking her, whom I thought more worthy of her; and in both cases I had imagined myself acting the most magnanimous part, and sacrificing my own happiness to promote theirs.

And now I really found myself in such a case. I had not the smallest doubt but that Bruce had fallen in love with her; and no presumption of self-complacency, could make me but acknowledge that he was infinitely my superior in many ways, and infinitely more worthy of her affection. What then should I do? Should I conceal his love from her? Or should I tell her of it, and offer to give up my own claim, if she thought she could like him best?

But how could I give her up? How even bear to run the chance of doing so? The thought seemed to drive me mad! Yet where then was all the splendid generosity with which I had always determined to act? Was the first trial to overthrow it?

I could not endure that thought; and in a transport of self-devotion I rushed back to the

berth where I had left Bruce; determined to ascertain whether my suspicions were, or were not, correct; and if they were, instantly to inform Mary, and give her her perfect freedom.

Had I allowed myself a moment's pause, I do not think I could have done it; and perhaps there was after all, more of chivalry, than of sound sense in it altogether. But be that as it may, in I went, and found Bruce sitting exactly as I had left him.

"Bruce," I said, almost before I had shut the door, "will you treat me as a friend, and answer me one question?"

"That is as it may be," he replied, raising his head, and stretching himself with a rather affected vehemence, as if he wished to deceive me into the belief that he had merely been idle, or sleepy; "a question is an easy thing for such a lively fellow as you to ask, but an answer is not always so easy for an idle dog like me to give."

"Don't joke, Bruce!" I cried, "for I really want to talk to you. I am sure you are not happy. We've always been friends—more so than any in the ship—and I can't be happy, while I see you are not so."

"Why should you suppose I am not so?" he replied; getting up, and brushing some piece of imaginary dust from his trowsers.

"I'm sure of it," I said; "and I fear greatly that I am the cause."

"You?" he said, stopping short in his operations for a moment; and then resuming them with redoubled energy.

"Yes, I feel sure that it is I who cause your unhappiness; and the thought of that makes me miserable. Now do sit down, and let me speak to you quietly while I can."

He sat down, and again resumed his old attitude, but said nothing. I took his silence as encouragement, so went on.

"*You* know, and none but you," I began, "that Miss Sydney is engaged to me; conditionally only indeed, as far as formality goes, though an engagement of the heart I fully believe it to be on both sides now. But I was hasty in speaking to her; and she is young, and hasn't seen many people; and before the time comes for our being quite—for everything to be settled, she might, you know—perhaps, see somebody she might like better than me—who might deserve her better,

and who might like her—not better—but as well as I do; and I only wish to say,” and I hurried on as if I feared dying before I could get it out, “that if that ever were so, I should not wish to stand in their way—I should wish her to be happy in her own way.”

“And why do you wish to tell me this, in particular?” said Bruce, without altering his attitude, though his voice trembled as he spoke.

“Because you are the only person in the world that I know of, who, if he did love her, could love her, I think as well as I do; and deserve her better; and because I think you *do* love her.” And I felt as if I must have dropped dead when I ceased speaking.

“I once read of a man,” said Bruce, still leaning down, “in some review it was—whose horrid hatred to another was so great, that though he meant to kill him, he would not do so, till he saw him in the act of committing a murder, which he himself had worked him up to; in order that he might be at the acme of his enormities at the moment that his atrocious soul was hurled into perdition. Now, being your friend, St. Clair, if I had intended to murder you, I would have waited till you had uttered

the words you have just spoken—the brightest, and best that ever fell from mortal lips !”

He raised his head as he spoke, and grasped my hand, while his features gleamed with his high feeling, though they quivered with emotion.

The tears sprung into my eyes as I returned his grasp ; for I was overcome by his words, and the great effort I had made ; though I felt that he estimated my action far above its due praise.

“ There is nothing wonderful in what I have done,” I began after a few moments ; “ nothing but what you, Bruce, would have done in my place.”

“ I am not so sure of that,” he replied more lightly ; “ I am not sure that I shouldn’t have followed the less generous but perhaps more sensible course (and he smiled kindly) of allowing my friend to keep his love to himself, and himself out of the way.”

“ Well,” I said, “ it might have been the more sensible course perhaps ; but somehow I could not have been happy in pursuing it. What should I have felt, if in after times, I saw I did not suit Miss Sydney as she expected ; or

make her as happy as I should wish? and then remembered that, but for me, she might have loved, and married you, who always make every one happy about you?"

"Why—I don't know," he replied; "it would have been painful to be sure; but however as Miss Sydney does love you, and doesn't love me, she may be happy with you, but wouldn't with me; so that settles the matter as far as she is concerned; and for myself, why I must do the best I can, since I have chosen to be such an incomparable idiot as to fall in love with a girl who I knew was in love with another. I only wonder, that instead of making these romantic offers, you haven't given me my choice of 'slugs in a sawpit,' or 'hatchets in a cellar;' or snugly consigned me, like some poor Bosphorian heroine to expiate my sins in the cool grottos of Father Ocean's pleasure-garden. I, spite of right, and might—for I shouldn't like to come to a tussle with you—have often longed to pitch *you* over the chains—that I can tell you—when I have seen you, where I would have given worlds to have been myself—fool that I am!"

Forgetful of the mortal agony his success

would have given me, I again urged his trying at least, his chance.

“What ! and throw you over !” he exclaimed. “Nenni Seigneur, vous remercie, honneur vaut bien maint amour. Remember what Landor says : ‘He who is inspired by love in a great degree, is inspired by honour in a greater ;’ and I trust it will ever be so with me.”

“But for *her* sake !” I madly continued, “give *her* the option ! let *her* judge ! I told you at first that I shouldn’t have liked you to have had my chance, for I knew that I should have had none afterwards myself ; and even now she seems to like you so much, that if she knew that you loved her—”

“She never shall,” he exclaimed, vehemently, starting up ; “I’d blow my brains out first.”

“Suppose I chose to tell her.”

“Do so if you dare !” he said furiously, seizing me by the collar, as if purposing to shake the life out of me.

“Come, come,” I said, half angry, half laughing, laying my hands on his shoulders, “be quiet, will you ; and be reasonable for once in your life. You know I cannot wish to lose her, no ! the thought is dreadful !” And I

shook off his hands, and turned away in great agitation ; striving to quell the storm of feeling which rose within me, as for the first time I really *felt* what the subject of our controversy was.

“ It *is* dreadful ! ” I heard him murmur, as again he sat down, and resumed the attitude of despondency which seemed almost to have become habitual to him.

“ Yes ! dreadful to one of us it must be,” I continued. “ The question therefore is, or ought to be, what will be most for *her* happiness ; for if you love—as I believe you, Bruce, are capable of doing—you must know that true love seeks the happiness of its object, and not its own selfish pleasure.”

“ I know it—I know it,” he replied, hurriedly ; “ but self will—will feel.”

“ It will, God knows how much ! But ought we not to give her the option ? ”

“ Certainly not,” he replied again quickly ; “ for even granting—which I do not grant—that I were likely to make her happier than you, still she is pledged to you ; and if she is the being whose idea I love, she would never be

happy under a consciousness of having acted ill by you, or any one. No, St. Clair, leave her with the best happiness—a clear fame, and pure conscience, and let me take my chance. I have been a fool—I have fallen into the snare with my eyes open; and I deserve to suffer for my pains. And as for you—if I do sometimes—and I *do*—long to pitch you, as I said, over the chains—yet you are the dearest friend I have on earth; and not the less so, for knowing that—of friends—I hold first place with you.”

“You are a generous fellow to speak so to a rival,” I said.

“I don’t call you a rival,” he replied, a little haughtily. “It is not as if we had entered the lists together, and you had cloven crest and helm, and made me bite the dust; then I might have felt a little sore;” (and his look, and tone showed that he would not in truth well have borne that). “But now it is no such thing. I have never appeared in the field: I’ve only taken a look at her, who is the priceless prize, and suffered for it—that’s all! But now I’m keeping you down here, when you ought to be up there with her.”

"No, when I went out just now, I heard our Captain talking to her, so you know it would be useless my going."

"You haven't offered to give her up to *him*, have you, on the score of his happiness-giving propensities?" he said; as one of his old, half contemptuous, half playful smiles, crossed for a moment his expressive face. "But I'm really heartily sorry," he added, "for having wasted all your time by my stupid folly." And he sighed deeply.

"Anything but wasted," I replied; "for no time so well spent as that which shows us the deep riches of a noble heart; and turns a liking, into a friendship for life."

"If you've found silver, I'm sure I've found gold," he replied; "so if you are satisfied, I am."

How drossy was the "gold" he thought he had found, God, and my own heart, only knew.

## CHAPTER IX.

The pause of anxious fear, awaiting soon  
The dimly-visioned object of its dread;  
While the hushed bosom fears to pant or sob,  
And the heart dares not throb.

UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

FROM the day we had that conversation, I saw that Bruce's feelings acquired greater and greater power over him—as is generally the case, when once a thing is spoken of; and I saw too that Mary was aware of it. I perceived this the day after I had spoken to him.

He had told me she was on deck;—and how it went to my heart, when I thought what it must have cost him to do so!—and hurriedly finishing what I was doing below, I ran up, and joined her, and her father, just as they were passing him. She stopped to speak to him,

asking him some simple question. He became pale, then crimson; and stammered out something of an answer; while I turned away, thinking that the consciousness that I was witness to his confusion, was partly the cause of it, or at least increased it. In doing so, I caught the expression of Mary's countenance. She seemed wonderstruck as she looked at him; then a deep suffusion covered her whole face, and her manner too became agitated.

What a moment that was for me! Millions of agonies crushed into one point! I felt dizzy, and leaving her side, went and leant against one of the masts. I could not look at either of them; yet could not let them out of my sight. That Mary had read Bruce's feelings I felt sure; and what might not be the effect upon her? I felt suffocating, I could not breathe. Hitherto I had had no rival but Captain Normanton; and I knew from the first that she disliked him; but now, here was one so made to please, so winning, so full of feeling, so good! —would she not regret that she had so easily given way to my wishes? that she had so hastily pledged herself to me, when she saw

that he loved her? Might she not even now involuntarily be led to love him, and find too late, that her feeling for me was but a delusion—a dream, which could satisfy her awakened heart no longer? Ah! the sharp agony of that thought!

But what if it should be so? Was not that the very thing I had contemplated in idea but the day before? Was not the likelihood of her preferring him, the very thing which had weighed on my conscience with such overpowering force, and caused me to speak to Bruce? What then made so great a difference between yesterday and to-day? Wherein did it lie? Alas! between the ideal and the real; between the distant and the near; between the resolve, and the performance.

Oh! weakness of human nature, how great art thou! Oh! strength of Divine grace, how greater still! In a moment there flashed across my mind, the memory of the first prayer, which I had ever offered up to God; offered months ago, near that very spot: the prayer that I might become worthy of Mary's love. As the thought of it darted through my heart, it be-

came again a prayer ; and again peace, strength, and courage, descended on my soul.

“ One prayer ! what mercy taught us prayer ? ”

I left the place where I had been standing, and advanced to where Mary, and General Sydney were speaking to some of the men—Mary having as I had dimly seen, soon parted from Bruce, who had gone below. She coloured deeply as she met my eye, and turned her head as if to examine something near. I stood by her, but could not speak, so wild a tumult had again returned upon my heart. I tried to do so, that by a word or look in answer, I might judge of what I had to hope, or fear ; but, as is constantly the case, the more I sought for words, the less could I force them from my lips.

To my great relief, however, General Sydney soon spoke to me. The necessity of answering seemed to break the spell which had lain on me so painfully, and to take some of the suffocation from my breast ; and at the sound of my voice, Mary looked up ; and though she coloured again, yet her blush was accompanied by a smile so reassuring—conscious indeed—

yet so sweet, so confiding, that I could have fallen at her feet, and implored her forgiveness, for having for a moment mistrusted her constancy and truth.

All was in an instant right between us ; and in silent happiness we walked up and down the deck. Both were conscious of possessing a secret ; but the time and opportunity were not such as to enable us to enter on it. Both felt too, in the midst of our own happiness, a deep sorrow for the noble heart whose feelings at that moment were of so different a hue.

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When I went below again, I found Bruce with several of our messmates, seemingly absorbed in a volume of Lord Byron. I said not a word, nor did he, till the others, one by one, had walked away. Then, throwing down his book with a considerable noise, he started up ; and said, with a nervous attempt at a laugh :

“ I’m a pretty keeper of a secret, St. Clair, am I not ? ”

“ Not very,” I replied. “ But to say truth, I shouldn’t have thought your feelings very

strong, if you could have kept them from her knowledge."

"But do you really think she observed anything?" he asked, with some confusion.

"I'm sure she observed something," I replied; "and as she couldn't have suspected you of having suddenly committed murder, or of having abstracted a plank in order to sink us all, she must, I imagine, have given the other more probable solution of your agitation."

"I am such a fool!" he exclaimed; "such an insufferable, unmitigable fool! Why couldn't I have kept out of her way? How shall I ever command a ship if I am to let my own flesh and blood rise in mutiny against me in this way? I would, as some one said, 'have paid a handsome difference to have exchanged with the man in the Black Hole at Calcutta'—I would have given all my year's pay—and yours too if that hadn't been enough—to have been buried alive, with the old Begum of something or other, eating her dinner at the top of me to keep me down, rather than have stood upon that deck, the living idiot that I was!"

"Well, never mind," I said, "there was no one to observe you, but her and me; for the old

General sees nothing. I knew it before, and for her, I don't think you need fear death from her hands."

He was silent a minute; then turning his back to me, he said, in a nervous voice:

"If ever she mentions the subject, do you mind telling me what she says?"

"That depends," I replied; "if I feel that I can, and ought, I certainly will—even—should it be more encouraging than I might like."

"You're a good fellow!" he said, still without looking towards me; "but there's no fear of that. But don't you begin on the subject; remember that; give me a last chance of escaping disgrace."

"Disgrace! where's the disgrace?" I exclaimed.

"None to you; I grant, success alters a case mightily. But no man, St. Clair, depend upon it, likes to have it known that he loves in vain."

"But with Mary and me, Bruce, you know that such knowledge would only enhance our regard for you."

"By adding pity to it, I suppose. I hate your pity!"

"But as you said yourself, it is not as if you

and I had entered the lists together, and I had won the prize from you. She was vowed mine, before she ever saw you. Don't, my dear fellow!" I continued, "don't let hard thoughts spring up in your mind towards me, or her; it would be a great misery to all if you did."

"No, no, St. Clair," he said, as turning round he grasped my hand; "I'll not do that; I owe you both too much; far too much!"

## CHAPTER X.

We love Thee, Lord, because when we had erred or gone  
astray,

Thou didst recall our wand'ring souls into the heaven-  
ward way.

When helpless, hopeless, we were lost in sin, and sor-  
row's night,

Thou didst beam forth a guiding ray of thy benignant  
light ;

Because when we forsook thy ways, nor kept thy holy will,  
Thou wast not an avenging Judge, but a gracious Father  
still.

Because we have forgotten Thee, but Thou forgettest not ;  
Because we have forsaken Thee, but Thou forsakest not.

UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

Then love your gracious Father, child of man !  
Strive to perform His will, not that you fear,  
But that you love. Love has a willing heart ;  
Fear is the bond of slaves—and perfect Love  
Casteth out fear.

TEGNÈR—(BETHUNE'S TRANSL.)

FREE as our intercourse was together, it  
was impossible but that the subject of Bruce's

attachment should soon be mentioned between Mary and me; though how it occurred I can scarcely remember.

"I am very grieved about it," she said one day. "Oh, that my father would but let me tell that I am engaged to you! It would be so much, much better. Then this would never have been."

"Bruce knew that we were engaged," I said. And I told her how that had happened; adding: "Had he not known it, why should he have kept out of your way?"

"But knowing it, how could he let himself—"

"How indeed! unless he could not help it;" and I smiled, as, looking at her, I felt how natural it was.

"I have felt much about Captain Normanton," she said; "but this is far sadder to me; for *he* should be loved so much!"

"You think so, Mary?" I said; a blackness gathering at my heart. "Tell me then, if you had not been engaged to me, could you have loved him?"

"If I had not loved you," she replied, lifting her dark expressive eyes to mine, with calm

confidence and affection, "I could have loved him, I think, very much; but that makes all the difference."

"But if you saw much of him, and always found him what you now think him, do you feel as if you could love him—better than me?"

"I don't think I could," she answered; adding with a smile: "and I don't mean to try. But I see fully, and feel deeply, your motive in asking me; and I shall never forget, Wilfred, that you were willing to sacrifice yourself for me. I know it is not want of love, but great love, which makes you willing to give up all your happiness for mine."

"It is," I replied; "and I thank God from the bottom of my heart that I can now love you, and see you love me, in peace. For Bruce, however, I feel very much; and wish heartily we were on shore that he might leave a place so trying to him."

"If you feel for him—as I know you do—and wish to do him good, you have much in your power that you might do."

"What?"

"I have often grieved in thinking of him,

that so little of godly feeling seemed mixed with his many delightful qualities; and if you could but lead his mind to the knowledge, and love of Him, 'whom to know is life, and to love is bliss,' you would be making up to him a million-fold, for any passing sorrow of this passing life, which we might have given him. Do try, dear Wilfred! Lead him to see the lost state of his soul, and—"

"Lost state of his soul!" I exclaimed, indignantly; "what can make you use such an expression with regard to him? Of all creatures in existence, next to yourself, I am sure that he is most certain of heaven. Who is there like him? So generous, so frank, so warm-hearted! If he is lost, who can deserve to be saved?"

"None certainly," she replied; "for does not 'being' saved,' infer that there is something to be saved from? namely: the punishment due to our sins? We cannot then *deserve* punishment, and yet *deserve* to be saved from it!"

"No, certainly," I replied; "I did not think of that; for one so often hears the expressions of 'deserving heaven,' and 'meriting salva-

tion,' that the idea of its being impossible—which it is—never struck me. But still, how can you call Bruce 'lost?' Are not his good qualities a proof that he is a child of God?"

"Not quite," she replied gently. "Some author says, 'A man may obey every law of God, without nevertheless obeying God; for He has told us to do all things from love to Him.' And do you think that it is love to God, which makes Mr. Bruce's feelings so generous, and good? or is not merely that his natural disposition is delightful?"

"But if it is even only that, it is God who has given him that disposition."

"Yes, but if he acts merely to please himself, and not to please God, is not that a proof that he is not God's child! Did you ever read any of Chalmers' works?"

"Never."

"They are so beautiful! He says in one of them: 'That which makes the moralities of this world nothing but "splendid sin," is that there is nothing of God in them.'"

"A curious expression! Why should he call them 'sin'?"

"Because, as he says, 'there is nothing of God in them.' That is the essence of sin. If you were the most devoted of sons, giving up everything for your mother, seeking your pleasure only in hers, yet thought not of God,—does that not prove that you would do for the object of an earthly affection, what you would not do for God? And is not that sin?—though being beautiful outwardly, it may be called—as Augustin called it first, and afterwards Chalmers—'splendid sin'? Oh, dear Wilfred! it is the heart's love to God, which alone proves us to be His children; nothing else; and that is a feeling that brings all joy."

"Well then, tell me what I can do for Bruce? for truth to say, I do not think he has any love to God, such as you describe. I have often heard him say light things on the subject; and indeed so have we all; for you have no notion what a set of beings we are in general when together."

"Have you ever spoken lightly of those things?"

"I have, Mary; but never can again, for I never again can feel lightly; and it is from that, that all the evil comes."

"I did not think you could ever have done so," she murmured in a low voice.

"I wish from my soul I never had; but as I told you, you really have no idea of what creatures like us are, in general. I can't bear to think of it now; though I will say for Bruce and myself, we are not like many of them; only so very careless and thoughtless! But the worse I have been, Mary, the more ought you to rejoice in having done me good,—for you have done me much good, and will, I trust, do me a thousand times more. Yes," I added, after a pause, "you are right in wishing to do that poor fellow good, for if the happy need God, how much more the unhappy! What shall I do for him then?"

"Pray, first, for God to open his heart, and then speak—what you feel. What comes from the heart, goes to the heart. He reads the Bible does he not?"

"Never."

"Nor prays?"

"I believe not. He said one day 'he could not fancy himself praying.'"

She was silent.

"I see you think very ill of us," I said after a time.

"Not of you, Wilfred;—for surely you pray, and read the word of God."

I was silent now in my turn; for conscience told me, that I had been as neglectful as Bruce in these matters. I saw the grief that shaded her eyes; and it fell like lead upon my heart. Never had a real sense of sin struck my soul till that moment; and the effect which the knowledge of it produced on the pure being before me, made me feel in some degree what I must appear before the All-pure himself.

"Wilfred," she said, after a little while; "it was sinful and careless in me, not to have found out what your feelings were, before I promised to be your wife; but I did not think you were one who could ever have forgotten to ask the protection of Him, who alone can protect,—or have neglected to use the mighty privilege of seeking peace and joy from the blessed word of God. What would you think, if you had written me a letter full of kindness, and unbounded love; relating sufferings you had endured for me,

—benefits you had procured me; asking me too to do such and such things for my own happiness, and your love's sake—and I refused, or neglected to read your letter, throwing it aside with other forgotten things? Would you think highly of my love—my devotion to you? surely not! And is not the Bible, a letter, written to each of us, by our heavenly Father's hand? telling us that He 'wills not that any should perish;' and that 'He so loved us as to send His son to die for us,' and speaking so many, many words of peace and joy? And have you neglected it?—Yes! I ought to have known your feelings, before I pledged my faith to you; but yet I trust—I pray that God will not visit my carelessness upon me; but will grant me the desire of my soul, the agony of my heart—and that you may be saved."

"You really think I may, Mary," I said; my whole heart melted within me, by the gentle sorrow, yet encouragement of her tone and words; "*that* hope then shall be ever before me; and I will pray; and try to enjoy

fully the privilege of having God to go to as a friend at all times. I *have* found it, and wonder I have not sought it oftener. His word too I will read. But tell me where to begin, for I am so ignorant !”

“Read then, dear Wilfred, will you? to-night, the fourteenth chapter of St. John. I think always that if any one begins there, they cannot stop, or fail to wish for more. The very first words are so cheering, so attracting. ‘Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me.’”

“Cheering indeed! But why did our Lord make that distinction: ‘Ye believe in *God*, believe also in *me*?’ *He was God.*”

“I think His meaning must have been, that the belief in God—God the Creator—the Judge—could bring nothing but a sense of condemnation to the sinful soul. But Christ having reconciled God’s justice to us, by suffering in our stead, we need not ‘be troubled,’ for there is henceforth no condemnation to them that are in Him; Christ Jesus, having as St. Paul says, ‘thrown down the middle wall of partition, making of two, one.’ Does not that seem likely to be His meaning?”

"Yes, I think so. But will you tell me, Mary—though do not despise me, for being so very untaught in these things—how it was, that Christ reconciled us to God?"

"Dear Wilfred, you must know that Christ died for us."

"Yes, I know that in words, but still somehow, it brings with it no definite idea to my mind. And when one thinks about it, the more He tells us our duty, and what we ought to do, the greater is our sin in not doing it!"

"He saved us, not by the duties He taught us to do, but by enduring for us the punishment we deserve for not having done them. You know, Wilfred, that being God, He could not sin; and you know too, that without sin there is no suffering. How could then Jesus have suffered, had not our sins been laid upon Him? — he bearing the punishment of them for us? And as by His sufferings He took away our punishment, so by His having kept perfectly the holy law of God in our place, He has deserved for us, and given to us, eternal life."

"Then all in the world are saved?"

“Yes, they *are all saved*, but they do not all *come to salvation*, because they do not think about it, or care about it. The pardon is signed, and sealed for all; but many are not the better for it, because they will not go and ask for it. If a kingdom had revolted, and a free pardon was proclaimed for all who came and sought it, would you not say there was pardon, or salvation for all? But if some from thoughtlessness, and others from an unsubdued will, would not seek that pardon, then they would not benefit by it, though it lay there waiting for them; and on them therefore the condemnation of the law they had broken, would justly fall. Have I made my meaning clear? for I am but a poor explainer.”

“Yes,” I answered, much struck by what she had said. “But yet it seems such presumption! I should never dare to think I was pardoned—such a sinner as I am!”

“If you asked it for any merits of your own, it would be presumption; but your claim is the merit of another.”

“Yes, dear Mary, I understand that; but

what right have I to go and ask for it, even though it is for the merit of another?"

"The right of having received a pressing invitation to accept it as a gift.

" 'Just as I am, without one plea,  
Save that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,  
O, Lamb of God ! I come.'

These are solemn things," she added, "but full of eternal joy to the pardoned heart."

"But if I sinned after being pardoned, what then?"

"You grieve for that sin, and, confessing it, ask for more strength."

"But should I not be condemned for it?"

"Oh, no ! God when He takes you for His child for Christ's sake, knows you are not perfect ; He 'accepts you as you are, for you give yourself to Him, and gradually makes you, such as He would have you to be.' Once saved, you are saved for ever ; all your sins, past, present, and future, were all borne by Christ, and are therefore all pardoned. The *whole* work of your salvation was accomplished when our Lord

bowed His head upon the cross and said: 'It is finished.' "

" Oh Mary! can that be? Why then we might do all that we liked."

" What would you like to do towards me whom you love, Wilfred?"

" You? Please you of course, in everything, if I could."

" And those who love God, like to please Him in everything. When they do not, it is sorrow to them; and the more they feel the certainty of forgiveness, the more sorrow do they feel for offending Him who has forgiven them. If they kept from evil, for fear of condemnation, they would be working for themselves—an aim, as has been said: 'selfish and idolatrous;' but when they know that all their punishment has been borne for them, that their own concerns are all safe for ever,—then they love to please Him who has done such things for them. 'The love of Christ constraineth us,' St. Paul says, 'not to live unto ourselves, but unto Him who gave Himself for us;' and that love, God puts into the hearts of all His children. In fact He puts Himself there, making us 'temples of the Holy Ghost.' "

“How wonderful these things seem!”

“How wonderful they are! but not more wonderful, than that men should have such happiness offered them, and reject it.”

“They do not know it to be happiness.”

“No; like the men in Noah’s time, ‘They knew not, till the flood came, and carried them all away;’ yet they had been told of it, for a hundred and twenty years. Oh! Wilfred! Christ is the only ark of safety. We seek for peace—we seek for happiness—vainly—till we find Him. ‘Those who find Him seek no further.’”\*

“I will seek Him, Mary, and will begin reading to-night where you told me; and if I can, I will ask Bruce to do so too.”

\* Dunnallan.

## CHAPTER XI.

That field of Promise! how it flings abroad  
Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road!

COWPER.

The pious are slower to help right, than the profane to  
hinder it.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

The Lord uphold and strengthen ye for your work;  
the Lord guide ye with the uplifting of His countenance,  
and give ye to walk firm in the midst of tribulation, and  
not to falter, or be weary in the way.—MERKLAND.

Among all the instruments to our delight, there is not  
one so potent, during its fugitive controul, or so mys-  
terious as music.—COLLOQUIES, &c. BY LANDOR.

ON leaving Mary I went below; and after  
having seen to a few things, I took up my Bible,  
(for though I had never read it, I possessed one,  
—the gift of my mother), and looked for the

chapter she had named to me. I expected some jeering from my messmates, should they observe my new occupation, but was determined that that should not prevent my doing what I now felt was a duty. The thought of pleasing Mary, and the charm of reading words which she delighted in, formed, I was aware, a great part of the motive which determined me to persevere, but by no means the whole. What she had said, had shown me the sin of treating with such contemptuous negligence, the great 'letter' of my Heavenly Father ; and I determined that no day of my life should henceforth pass, without my enriching my soul with some of its precious stores.

Little, however, did I anticipate the exceeding preciousness of the words I was about to read ; and as I read them, and somewhat of their spirit stole into my breast, how did I marvel at the blindness, and folly, which had so long made me shut out from myself such sunny influences, and such heavenly joy !

Well indeed had she chosen that portion of God's blessed word, for a young, and thoughtless heart like mine ; for the tenderness, and love there displayed, the power spoken of, and the

peace promised, were supremely calculated to melt the icy breast, and send its gushing feelings upwards to its God! I read on, and on,—I could not stop.

I was happily quite alone when I thus took my first draught of the pure ‘waters of life;’ and it was well for me that the words: ‘Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,’ were still echoing through my heart, when I heard some of my shipmates come down. I knew now the value of the treasure which was opened before me, and was not in a mood lightly to have it snatched from me; and I knew also, on what arm I must depend for gaining the victory. I would not hastily put by my book, for I dreaded beginning by giving way to my own cowardice.

I breathed a hasty prayer, as I heard the rushing feet of several of the youngsters running down the ladder, in wild sport and spirits. I knew them all well, some vicious, some weak, some amiable; all with their faults, all too, with their better qualities. I could not forget—merely because my own mind was now a little changed—the light way in which I too had been used to view these things; and I could not

therefore but feel for those who were still unknowing of the vein of gold that had been opened to me.

I was not prepared before it was needful. They all burst into the berth like boys playing at 'Hare and Hounds,' when on seeing my Bible before me, the foremost of them stopped short with a theatrical start, and silencing the others, advanced on tiptoe, as if about to examine some venomous beast. When he came close, he made a sudden dart at the Bible ; but I having watched him, unable almost to prevent laughing at his absurd ways, saw what his intention was ; and catching it up, instantly deposited it in safety in the chest where I had always kept it. He then, as I was returning, flourished out both his hands, so as to call the others to take hold of them, and sang<sup>d</sup> out :

"Come let us dance this round-a-round-a-round, &c."

And all joining hands, they got in a circle round me, prancing with all imaginable antics, till out of breath they stopped, dropping down on chests, the deck, or whatever first presented itself. In the midst of the confusion, in came Bruce.

"Holloa!" he cried, "what's all this noise about?"

The prime mover stepped forward in the same theatrical way as before; and bowing low to Bruce, who looked the picture of scorn—for though full of fun himself, he had a hatred of everything approaching to buffoonery—said, in the most affected of voices:

"It is only the ebullitions of joy in youthful spirits, Mr. Bruce, at the charming discovery that from amongst us wicked sinners has sprung up a 'Saint'—Clair."

"St. Clair, do you mean?" said Bruce in great indignation; going up to him as if he meant to knock him through the ship's side.

"My dear Bruce," I said, taking hold of his arm, "we have all been playing the fool together;"—for I had really laughed as much as the others, they were so very absurd—"and I am so hot that I must get out of this black hole; so come up on deck with me." And I dragged him off, still scowling defiance at the others.

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“What was it all about?” he said, when we got on deck.

“Oh! only they found me at the unwonted occupation of reading the Scriptures,” I answered; “and so they were inclined to make merry a little at my expense. But there was no good in being angry about it; it will all do very well in a little while; and I don’t care about it much.”

“But what on earth have you taken to read the Scriptures for?” exclaimed Bruce contemptuously; forgetting how enraged he had been with the others but a minute before. “Are you turning Methodist? You’d better not, or you and I shall soon part company, I can tell you. I hate your canters, and psalm-singing scoundrels!”

I made no answer, for I did not choose to be spoken to in such a way, even by him.

He again repeated his question in still more offensive terms; and I still remained silent. Had I spoken, it must have been intemperately—an ill result of reading God’s word, he would have thought.

“Can’t you answer a man when he asks

a plain question?" he said, in a most irritating tone.

"Yes," I replied, "when he asks it as he ought." And I turned away, and began talking to some one else.

He stopped in surprise when he saw I was gone, and stood still a moment; then resumed his walk more rapidly than before; coming so near me several times, as to brush by me as he passed. I felt my temper getting into a fearful storm; and I think I must have knocked him down, if he had done it again; but the words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," rose to my remembrance, and in a moment stilled the tempest in my breast. Oh, how delightful it was to me, thus to have the evidence of God's presence with me! having begun, as I had, to crave for His love and favour.

Just then too rose on my ear, that voice which had been the messenger of grace to me; and which then came with an angel's power to soothe and strengthen. At its sound, Bruce stopped short in his walk; and when he resumed it, it was with a quieter step. He took his line, I evidently saw, wider of me this

time ; so as he passed, my anger having vanished, I fell into the step with him, and walked up and down together again, as quietly as if nothing had happened.

“What is she singing?” he asked at length, in a voice whose sadness went to my heart.

“‘Ruth,’” I replied.

“What are the words? You know them, I suppose?”

I repeated them ; when coming to the passage : “Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God,” he interrupted me ; saying in a tone vibrating between contempt, and tenderness :

“Was it that, that set you reading your Bible this afternoon?”

“If you mean the wish that Mary’s God should be mine,” I replied, “yes ; besides that she had herself begged me to read it.”

“And so you think,” he continued, all tenderness having left his voice, “that the wish to please a woman, and the poor-spiritedness that makes you do everything that a woman desires you, is religion, do you? *I* call it contemptible, insufferable cant, and hypocrisy.”

I often wonder that I did not strike him to the deck at that moment ; for I felt suddenly on fire with rage ; my blood boiled in my veins till I thought they would have burst. Furiously turning to him, I asked what he meant by speaking in that way.

He did not answer for a moment, checked a little by the storm he had raised in me ; but his countenance instantly resuming its character of contempt—his eye glowing, and his nostril quivering with passion as he turned his ashy face to me, he seemed about to launch forth some new insult, when the voice again sounded ; and the words : “Entreat me not to leave thee,” rose almost as an embodied form between us. The current of my feelings instantly changed ; and had I been alone, I could have thrown myself upon the deck, and wept passionate tears in the bitterness of my spirit. I put up my hand vehemently, to stop Bruce’s speaking, and said :

“No more of this.” And turning, I went below.

When there, I paused a moment to catch Mary’s voice more distinctly ; and again heard

her pronounce the words: "Thy God, my God."

Oh! with what soothingness did they come to my heart!

"Yes!" I thought, "thy God *shall* be my God." And I covered my face with my hands, to force back the softened tears which the thought of Him, whom my fierce passion must so much have displeased, caused to gush up from the very bottom of my soul. I dared not stay there, lest any one should see me, so turned into my berth; and as no one was there—with that craving for spiritual things which the really awakened mind so invariably feels—I again drew forth my Bible, and once more read those blessed words: "Let not your heart be troubled."

Peace settled down again upon my soul, and under its Heaven-sent influence I wondered that things so light as human words, should have power to lash the mind to such fury. I was young in godly feeling then, and knew not with what mighty power Satan works, when he finds the prey he had thought his own, escaping from his grasp.

Though my soul was tranquillized under the word of God, yet my physical being was still all in agitation from the violence of my late feelings; and the thought that it was Bruce who had so insulted me—Bruce, for whom I had been willing to do so much!—was the bitterest that had ever crossed my mind. It seemed as if I could never call him friend again; for besides his enmity to religion, his words respecting me and Mary, could not be forgotten.

## CHAPTER XII.

His beautiful eyes! they ill become the flash,  
That blasts like lightning in its sheer descent.  
Tears might have trembled on their long dark lash,  
A seraph's tears!—  
Or seraph-rapture might have glistened there,  
When forth on messages of love he went,  
To snatch the thorn-wreath from the brow of care :  
Or bring to waiting hope the promised meed of  
prayer.

HANKINSON.

I WAS sitting brooding over Bruce's words in strange disturbance of mind, forgetful of the peace-giving volume which still lay open before me, when Palgrave, the ringleader in the late attack, came again into the berth. I scarcely thought of him, however, for my mind was full of other things; and I should hardly have noticed him as he came in and went out again

had I not heard a sound of other feet at the half-opened door, and caught the words, spoken in a low whisper by one of the younger lads :

“ No, don't, Palgrave, he was so good-humoured before.”

“ Hang his good-humour !” said Palgrave.

Still, however, I did not think of the Bible, so much did the painful thought of Bruce absorb me ; till Palgrave having re-entered the berth, and walked quietly to the table, suddenly snatched it up, and in an instant tossed it up to the beams. It had not far to go, and as it came down again, catching it on his foot, he kicked it up again. In an instant I had stretched him on the deck, and his head coming in contact with one of our chests was cut open, and bled profusely as he lay on his back stunned by the fall. All the others who had been staying behind the door, rushed in, and Bruce, who had just come down stairs, came in with them. I was trying to lift Palgrave up.

“ What's this ?” he exclaimed, his eyes flashing fire. “ You have murdered him !”

“ I hope not,” I said, “ for he is in no state to die.” I had seen that he was only stunned,

or I could never have answered with such apparent indifference.

"No, he's not dead," said Bruce; as he and some of the others helped to raise him from the deck; "the better for you. Here, one of you, run for the surgeon, while I go to the Captain. Brutality like this shall not be suffered to pass."

"Don't say a word against St. Clair," exclaimed the boy, whose voice I had recognised at the door, as expostulating with Palgrave—"for if he hadn't knocked that fellow down, I'd have done it myself."

I looked at the noble child as he spoke—the youngest, and the deserved "darling of our crew," a little fellow scarcely five feet high, —Bruce being above six—his boyish countenance glowing with indignation, as he looked defiance up into the other's face,—a second David, defying a second Goliath!

Bruce seized him by the arm with so fierce a grasp as shook his whole frame. The boy compressed his lips, evidently to keep back the cry of pain which that iron gripe almost forced from him, while he kept his kindling eye still proudly upon Bruce's.

I threw myself between them.

“Stand back,” I cried to Bruce, “and keep your coward hands off the boy.”

Bruce's whole fury then turned on me, against whom in fact it was all directed; for he had no personal spite against young D'Arcy, but had always loved the boy. He threw the child from him with a violence that sent him staggering back against the bulkhead, and rushing on me, seized me with both hands round the throat. I should have been dead in a minute, had I not thrown my arms round his body, and, with a strength I can never think of without astonishment—for he was as tall, and much stouter than I—hurled him to the deck.

At that moment the Captain entered, having been informed of the affray; and seeing my violence towards Bruce, instantly ordered me into arrest. In vain all voices were raised to say that the attack was commenced by Bruce; the Captain pointed to Palgrave, who was still but partially recovered from his stupor, and to whom the surgeon was attending, and said:

“At any rate, I am informed that Mr. St. Clair knocked this unfortunate young man down first.”

So under arrest I was put.

I was about to speak in my own defence; but the Captain coldly said that it was too late then, and he could hear nothing that night on any side of the question; but that he was shocked beyond measure, that such disgraceful outrages should take place in his ship.

“Let me have a report of Mr. Palgrave’s case, Mr. Curtis,” he said to the surgeon, “as soon as I leave General Sydney’s cabin; for I must let him know what all the noise has been about, lest he should have been alarmed.”

So saying—and saying so for my special edification I knew—he departed; and a moment after, we heard him knock at the General’s door, and obtain admittance.

Bruce had risen to his feet the moment almost that he had touched the ground; and subdued by the Captain’s presence, had remained quiet, whilst the latter remained in the berth. He then walked out, saying as he passed me:

“This does not end here, Mr. St. Clair.”

I made no reply, but followed the marine to whom I was given in charge; having first secured my ill-used Bible, and shaken hands with my messmates; all of whom gave me

some kind word Palgrave had been removed to the sick-berth.

When I got to my berth, I asked to be allowed to speak to D'Arcy, and after some little time the boy came to me.

"D'Arcy," I said, "I'm sorry I've brought you into trouble."

"I'm very glad if you have," he replied.

"Why?"

"Because it makes me see what a frightful thing it is for fellows to go on without the Bible, or God, or anything. What would my poor father say, if he knew I'd hardly ever opened a good book since I came on board; for he bade me never go to bed, let me be as tired as I might, without reading a verse or two, at least, of the Bible. But I found nobody did it here, so I was ashamed, and let it drop."

"But don't do so any more, my boy."

"No, I shall take care of that," he answered; "this has been a good lesson for me."

"We must strengthen each other, D'Arcy," I said, "and never let bad example get the better of us again; God help us! for we need it sorely. I hope Palgrave is not much hurt. I was wrong in what I did, but it was done

before I had time to think ; his doing that put me in such a rage."

"I don't know, I'm sure, whether you were right or wrong," replied the boy ; "all I can say is, as I said to Bruce, if you hadn't done it, I should—or have tried—myself. He's not much hurt though, I heard them say ; and I hope it'll teach him better manners another time."

"Now, D'Arcy," I said, "I want you to do me a service. I want you to take this to General Sydney's cabin as soon as the Captain leaves it. I can't seal it, but you won't open it, I know, for you're as honourable as you're brave."

"I should hope not," he replied, proudly ; "but thank you for trusting me." And his voice quivered.

"I would trust you," I said, drawing the little fellow to me, "before almost—aye ! *now*, before any man alive." And it seemed as if my heart must burst, as the thought of Bruce again flashed across me.

"Those are great words, St. Clair," said the boy, looking up with flashing eyes into my face ; "and I hope you'll never find you've been wrong in using them."

I had torn a slip of paper out of my pocket-book, on which I had written these words :

“Forgive me, Mary. I have been very violent ; but I could not see the word of God contemptuously treated, nor a child ill-used. Pray for me, and for the little fellow who takes this—and for Bruce. Send me one word in answer.”

“You’ll ask if there’s anything to bring back,” I said, as I gave it him ; “and be quick, my boy.”

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When again alone, the realities of my position for the first time vividly flashed upon me. It was not unusual in such cases, for young officers to be expelled the service, a sentence I always thought—unless under most aggravated circumstances—harsh even to cruelty ; considering the utter ruin it brings in general on their future prospects ; and the little pains that are generally taken by captains of ships, either by precept, or example, to teach them to control their tempers ; and if such a sentence were passed upon me—and that it might be, the Captain’s enmity made it, I thought, but too

probable—what would become of me? Would Mary marry me with such a blot upon my name? My heart instantly answered “Yes.” But would her father permit it? Would I?

These were terrible thoughts. My poor mother too!

But I did Captain Normanton injustice. Though from having been a favourite, second only to Bruce, I had evidently of late become an object of aversion to him, yet he was a strictly honourable man. Hard, and tyrannical he certainly was, and set upon having his own way, even in the merest trifle; but to have done an ungentlemanlike, or dishonourable action, of that he was incapable. If his decision were stern, it would be the result only of the natural harshness of his disposition, and of what he thought the interests of the service required; and not a personal vindictive feeling.

While thinking on this distracting subject, D’Arcy returned, bringing with him, as I had hoped, a line from Mary.

“You’re the fleetest messenger that ever lived,” I said.

“The Captain was gone you see,” he replied; “and I asked her to be quick.”

“What made you give my note to Miss Sydney? I had not directed it to her.”

“I didn’t give it her,” he replied; “I gave it to the old General, and he gave it her, and bid her answer it. But that doesn’t signify,” he added smiling, “we all know about *that*;—*that’s* no secret.”

“What’s no secret?” I asked, looking at Mary’s note, though I could not bear to open it in the boy’s presence.

“It’s no secret that you and Miss Sydney are much of the same mind on most subjects;—at least so they say,” he answered.

“That’s what they say, is it?” I replied lightly. “Perhaps they’re right, and perhaps they’re wrong. But now I mustn’t keep you longer, so good night, my boy! You’re the best fellow I know. God bless you.”

We shook hands heartily, and he left the berth. Then I opened Mary’s letter; not without heart-sinkings: for I dreaded lest her mild and gentle nature should have been deeply shocked, and hurt by my violence. How can I describe then, the delight—the surprise with which I read these words:

“I may be wrong for not blaming you

much ; but from Mr. Bruce's account, I cannot be thankful enough for the feeling you have shown. May God strengthen you in all things.

“ Your's ever,—ever your's,  
MARY SYDNEY.

What blessed words !

But—“ Bruce's account ?” I exclaimed, “ what can she mean ?—She must have meant the Captain's. Yet he was not likely to make out a very favourable account for me.”

“ Be it as it might,” I thought, “ at least she is not angry with me,—she does not blame me much !” And that thought brought calm to my troubled spirits, and allayed a little the burning fever which excitement had brought on.

## CHAPTER XIII.

If rightly you love God,  
You love your brother too.

\* \* \* \*

Like you  
Is he not sailing on a strange wild sea ?  
Do not the same stars guide his wandering way ?  
How can'st thou hate thy brother ? Oh ! forgive,  
If he hate thee ; is it not excellent  
That thou can'st learn to stammer forth one word,  
Such as is used in Heaven ? in earthly speech  
It is forgiveness. Hast thou never heard  
Of One, who, while He wore a crown of thorns,  
Forgave His foes, prayed for His murderers ?  
Do you not know Him ?

BETHUNE'S TRANSL. OF TEGNÈR.

THE emotion which Mary's note had excited  
had a little passed away, and I was once more  
reading, and with what deepened feeling ! the

blessed words of eternal love, when the marine who had me in charge came in, and gave me a note which he said had come from Mr. Bruce; adding that he would call in a few minutes for an answer.

I took the note, but I could not open it for a time. The sight of his handwriting, brought him so vividly before my eyes;—him in his bright and generous beauty; him in his dark, insulting ferocity!—till as I thought of him, I alternately glowed with man's heartfelt friendship, and man's indignant scorn. I could scarcely believe it was the same being who could appear in characters so different—different as light from darkness! Then seizing his note, I opened it with a hurried hand. It contained but few words:

“For God's sake, forgive me, St. Clair! I am most wretched!”

Strange as it may seem, not all the thrilling emotions which Mary's affection—life of my life as it was; not all the combined agitations of my existence put together, equalled one half of what I felt at that moment. Strong attachment amongst men is perhaps rare, but it can be intense!

I snatched up a pen, and had almost illegibly

—so powerfully was my whole frame shaken—written in answer: “Forgive you! yes! with heart, and soul, and strength!” when I jumped up, and called the marine, saying: “I must see Mr. Bruce!”

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In a few minutes he was with me.

Years might have passed in that brief time, so full was it of feeling! We wrung each other's hands in silence again and again, as if we could not be thankful enough.

“You forgive me, St. Clair?” he said, at length.

“You know I do, Bruce.”

“I cannot account for what I did,” he exclaimed; “I felt like a madman,—and now I'm so utterly miserable! I had almost rather you should abuse me for hours, than forgive me.”

“You have more than made up for everything,” I said, “by writing what you did to Miss Sydney.”

“How do you know I wrote to her?”

“She told me, in a note; and it has saved me the pain of having pained her; and has proved you, too—what I always thought you—the most generous fellow in the world.”

“It was but truth,” he said sadly.

“I was not without my share of blame.”

“You had no blame,” he answered quickly; “none but a dastard coward would have acted otherwise. I cannot tell why I felt in such a fury. I really believe I was possessed by the devil! Though, I must say, that when I came down, and saw that fellow Palgrave lying on the ground, bleeding away, I’d no idea of what he’d been doing; I should never have taken his part if I had. When I found it out, I was confounded; and could almost have said with that fine lad D’Arcy: ‘If you hadn’t done it, I would myself.’ Though I don’t read the Bible, yet none but a brute would have used it as he did!”

“That little fellow is one of a thousand,” I exclaimed.

“Yes, and if you’d seen him afterwards, you’d never have forgotten him. When I had heard what the thing was, I could not rest without asking his forgiveness for my—what you justly called—‘coward’ attack upon him. He said it was ‘nothing—nothing;’ but I forced him to bare his arm, which I thought almost I must have broken; and when I saw the horrid marks of my brutal violence on his young flesh, my very heart turned sick. He spoke so nobly, and so feelingly, and bade me

think no more about it; as if I could help it! You, and he may read your Bibles for ever, as far as I'm concerned, if it is that which makes you have such patience with me."

"I haven't read it much yet," I replied. "It was only this evening that I had my initiation—a stormy one certainly—into its powerful comforts. But powerful they are! I wish, Bruce, you would try them. Miss Sydney begged me so earnestly to ask you to do so."

"Miss Sydney!" and his colour came and went. "Why should she care what I do?"

"Of course she feels a great interest in you—naturally. So pray yield to her earnest wish, and read the words she loves so much."

"If I would, I've got no Bible."

"I will lend you mine," I exclaimed; glowing with joy at this unexpected softening of his heart; "and begin, will you, at the words she pointed out to me. I'm sure we both need them to-night."

"What are they?"

"'Let not your heart be troubled.'"

"Need them! Yes, I think so!" he exclaimed with a bursting sigh. "But it is very well to say: 'Let not your heart be troubled,' but how is one to help it?"

“Only by prayer, I think.”

“Prayer! what do you know of prayer, St. Clair?”

“Not much certainly; but just enough to show me, that it gets for one what one wants. I do not mean always earthly things, I mean the wants of one’s spirit: peace, strength, and comfort.”

“They are indeed needed,” he exclaimed, clasping his hands above his head agonizingly for a moment.

“I’m a great fool,” he then said; “and I suppose shall be so all my life. I shall be better of this folly though, when I am ashore, and away from her, with no chance of seeing her, or again hearing that voice of hers, that tears my heart to pieces. It was what she sung I really believe this evening, that put me at last into such a phrenzy. At first it softened me; but when you told me the words, and I knew she was singing them—speaking them to you—I felt as if I could have killed you! God forgive me! it is very terrible to be the slave of such passions!”

“It will be better when you get home, and are amid new scenes, and old friends. But now—think I beseech you, on what Miss Sydney called the ‘lost state of your soul.’”

"Lost! Did she call me lost?" he exclaimed in evident agitation.

"She did, and I felt indignant at first; but she soon showed me that, though a person may be excellent, and delightful as far as this world goes, yet if they have not a greater love for God than for all else, it proves they are not His children, and consequently must be lost."

He made no answer, but I saw by the expression, and working of his features, that he was ill at ease.

"Her saying this," I added after a few minutes, "proved to me that I was not His faithful servant, any more than you, Bruce. But somehow I cannot but feel that of late there has been a great change in me. I delight in these things now, more than in anything else; for I am not always happy, even when with Mary, unless she speaks to me of them; and it was, I think, the great joy I had felt in reading the Scriptures to-night, which made me so very indignant with Palgrave for doing what he did."

"Palgrave's a brute," exclaimed Bruce vehemently.

"No, not that," I said; "but he is so accustomed to turning things into ridicule, that he

loses all proper respect for everything ; besides particularly detesting all that is in the least serious. But he is a good-natured fellow."

"And do you feel easy, St. Clair, under the idea—the possibility even of being lost?" asked Bruce, recurring to the subject in an anxious tone; "or do you feel as if something would save you?"

"I feel certain of nothing as yet," I replied; "but I seem to get a little higher by degrees, in the scale of existence; not to be the mere worldling that I was before; and I feel as if I had something too of the love of God. Still if I were away from those who speak of Him, I might perhaps sink again, as low as I was before. But constantly I use the prayer that Mary asked me to say: 'Oh God, take my heart to Thyself, for I cannot give it to Thee; and when Thou hast taken it, Thou wilt keep it for Thyself, for I cannot keep it for Thee.'"

"Say it again," said Bruce.

I did so; and I observed his lips moving as if he were trying to remember it.

He was forced to leave me, and he took my Bible away with him. I longed for it sorely as I sat alone in my berth, but could not grudge it to him; and earnestly did I pray that reading it

might be of as great comfort to him, as it had been to me. With what royal munificence was that prayer answered !

I occupied myself for some time in such poor thoughts of God as I could command ; and which, blended as they were with the remembrance of Mary's words, and gentle persuasions, seemed inexpressibly delightful to me. As I pondered over all that had passed, I could not acquit myself of blame so completely as Bruce's generous spirit had done. I would not certainly have wished to see unmoved such shameless outrage against God, as Palgrave had been guilty of ; but still I could not but feel, that calm remonstrance would have been more in conformity with Christ's mild wisdom, than the passionate outbreak I had given way to ; and I prayed earnestly that never again might I be permitted so to sin against God. " Be ye angry and sin not," I afterwards read in the Scripture, and found how exactly the injunction suited my case.

## CHAPTER XIV.

To ask Him for counsel—to bend a throbbing head over that wonderful record wherein it stands that never man went unhealed away out of His presence—that never voice of human anguish fell unheeded upon His ear—what could the result be?—THE MELVILLES.

To thee God is telling this day, the story of His free love; that, receiving it, thou mayest not perish, but have everlasting life. That free love thus received into thy heart in believing, would fill thee with joy unspeakable. It would be like fragrance from the flowers of Eden, like sunshine from the very heaven of heavens. It would not call on thee to wait till thou hast made thyself ready for receiving it; it would come into thee at once, like sunlight into thy lattice, without insisting that thy chamber be adorned for its reception. It would cost thee nothing but the giving up of that which is far better lost; and which would be but a poor recompense for a ruined soul.—BONAR.

AFTER a sleep unusually sound, for I was thoroughly wearied, body and mind, I was

awakened in the morning by the marine, who came to tell me that Palgrave had had a good night, and that the surgeon said there was nothing but a slight cut on the head, which need not in the least interfere with his duty; all of which was of course very welcome news to me.

After a time I was summoned for the examination which was to take place concerning the last night's affray; and witnesses were called, and accounts given; and everything took place which usually does take place on those occasions. The result was, that all three of the principals were reprimanded, more or less severely, according to the discretion of the Captain; but no further punishment inflicted. He said that such flagrant breaches of order could not have been passed over by him in so light a manner, had it not been that our mutual connection was so soon to cease. That after having had the command for some years, of as fine a crew, and excellent a set of officers—so he was pleased to say—as any in His Majesty's service, he should have felt it a deep wound to his pride, as well as to his feelings, to have had to report his vessel in a state of disorder when he went into port; or to have parted with old friends, under a sense of painful displeasure. He then proceeded to address each of the offending parties; and I must

say that his mode of acting towards me, did him much credit,—actuated as I knew he was, by no internal bias in my favour. He said that, under ordinary circumstances, the violence of my conduct towards Mr. Palgrave must have been visited with marks of high displeasure; but that the fact of his having so grossly outraged, not only my feelings, but those of every one who had the least respect for the Almighty, or His holy law, greatly altered the case; and that though he disapproved the strong measures I had used, he could not but participate in the feelings which had led to them. He spoke also in high commendation of the spirit which young D'Arcy had shown; saying with much kindness, that he hoped he might live to exhibit equal firmness and courage some day before the enemies of his country. His address to Palgrave was very severe; tinged moreover with contempt.

He spoke to Bruce the last; and though all he said was just, yet I could not endure to hear him speak to him with such severity before us all. He knew, perhaps, that he was suspected of favouring him in general above the others—and especially, latterly, above me—and he seemed determined in this case to do me even more than justice. I was much struck by Bruce's manner of receiving what

was said ; for it was no small trial to a haughty spirit like his, to have such animadversions made before his shipmates. No trace, however, of indignation appeared, though there was deep emotion ; and no words can describe the beauty of his countenance as, raising his eyes, when Captain Normanton paused, he said with deep feeling :

“ It is all true, Sir ! ”

Captain Normanton was visibly moved ; and his countenance instantly relaxing at this frank avowal of error, he added, “ that, notwithstanding what had just passed, he could not withhold his testimony as to the perfect manner in which Mr. Bruce had, till that unfortunate moment, conducted himself ever since he had been under his command ; and as this was his first, so, he felt confident, would it be his last offence, let the term of his life be what it might.”

A murmur of extreme approbation was heard throughout the whole party at this, while Bruce bowed gratefully. The Captain then spoke to us in a way that greatly touched me, and probably all present. He said that he felt sure that after what had happened we should all vie with each other as to which could best maintain the discipline of the ship for the few remaining days we should be together ; and keep unbroken the bonds of good-

fellowship with those with whom we had been so long on friendly terms, and from whom we were about to part, possibly never to meet again; and he hoped that those who had been engaged in the last night's unfortunate affair, would show that all angry feeling had passed away by cordially shaking hands.

This was immediately done; and I am sure I was glad enough that Palgrave had a hand to shake; for, though a favourite with none of us, yet till the last night we had always been very good friends.

Bruce's manner on this occasion was perfectly characteristic of him. He had had no quarrel with Palgrave, therefore was not called upon to shake hands with him; but he passed him by with marked contempt; while in shaking hands with D'Arcy and me, he showed the greatest warmth of manner; taking his place between us, and resting his arm on D'Arcy's shoulder, during the few remaining words which the Captain addressed to us.

The boy's face glowed with pleasure; and as I looked at them both, I thought I had never seen two finer, or more noble countenances. The younger of them is now gone to his rest. I was with him at his death, a few years after; and it was delightful

to see how completely God redeems His word of promise to be with His people at all times ; and how His presence can animate, and illumine the road that leads direct to Him.

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When the trial was over, and the Captain had departed, Bruce took my arm, and we went to our berth.

“ Oh ! St. Clair,” he exclaimed, after a minute’s silence, “ you do not know what a change has taken place in me, since last we met. You gave me the word of God to read, and I did read it ; not only the chapter you pointed out, but many more—I could not stop. The incidents of the evening, and the wretchedness I felt from many causes, had perhaps prepared my mind, for receiving with solemnity the words of heavenly truth ; but instead of finding them as I expected, hard, and full of condemnation, I found them full of a charm I cannot describe ; and as you know, full of love, and peace, and pardon. I felt as if in a new existence, so holy an atmosphere seemed to be around me. The world, its jars, and jealousies, almost its loves, and affections, seemed to sink away too far beneath me to ruffle, or disturb ; and I was able to pray, long and earnestly—a thing I had never done before in my life. At first I felt such a sense of sin as quite overpowered me ; but

at last the thought of Christ's perishing for sinners, was brought to my mind, and in an instant the burden on my heart was gone. I felt at peace—and pardoned."

"Bruce!" I exclaimed, in extreme surprise, "what can you mean?"

"I mean what I say," he replied; "I felt as if my spirit was washed from all its stains, and my soul pardoned all its sins; and *that* through the blood of Christ."

I was bewildered. I have said that often when talking to Mary, I could not understand the meaning of many things she said; for, though I had begun to feel the deepest interest in the subject, I was still very dark as to the way of salvation. And now, when I heard Bruce,—Bruce, who but yesterday was reviling me as a hypocrite, and despising my weak efforts after godliness—heard him speak things so contrary to all he had ever felt, or thought before,—it seemed as if I was under some spell of necromancy. Had not my mind become accustomed to Mary's pious, God-fraught feelings, I should have fancied he was raving; but recognising in his new expressions, the same thoughts, and high feelings, which seemed ever the native air of her soul, I could not but believe them to be words of truth, and workings of the Spirit of God.

I sat dumb under this evidence of His mighty power ; stupified at the feeling, that wondrous things were passing before me, without my being able to see them—marvellous sounds rushing by, without my hearing them—overpowering influences shedding themselves abroad, without my feeling them !

It was but a few short hours since I had sat in that same spot, endeavouring to persuade Bruce to take for the first time, into his reluctant hand, the page of inspiration ; and now he was in sunshine on the mountain-top, while I was still toiling my darkling way up its steep, and often rugged sides ! All the joy, and sweetness I had so often felt in the thought of those heavenly heights to which love divine—through the sanctified medium of earthly affection—was slowly leading my weak and wavering soul, seemed gone from me ; and I felt depressed, and abandoned ; as I could imagine the solitary Elisha would have felt, when he saw his master borne off to heaven in his fiery chariot, had he not had the mantle of his spirit, sent down to raise his own soul to the same glorious regions. I was not envious of Bruce's happiness, but I sat there with a soul-sinking sense of spiritual abandonment.

He put his kind hand on my shoulder, and said in a cheering voice :

“Why so silent, St. Clair? I thought you would have been the first to help me to praise God for His wondrous mercy to me.”

“I do from my soul thank Him,” I replied ; “but I feel left so far behind myself, that all energy and spirit seems gone from me.”

“Surely, St. Clair,” he said, “when you see what God’s mighty power can do in subduing so worthless, and rebellious a spirit as mine was, but a fleet twelve hours ago, *you* cannot despond ! You ! the fearless champion of His honour ! the faithful preacher of His love ! Was it not you that persuaded me to read His word ;—you who placed its precious pages within my hand ? Have you not been the minister of salvation to my soul ? the being who has snatched me from destruction, and led me to Him who says, not in vain : ‘My peace give I unto you ?’ And is it for *you* to despond ?”

His animated words cheered me a little, and I replied :

“No ! I do not despond, or doubt God’s merciful intentions towards me ; and when listening to Mary, I have always felt peace and joy follow

her words into my heart. But she leads me on line by line, word by word ; and though even then I cannot always follow her, yet there seems always something, which by prayer, and patience, I may attain in time. But to see you, all of a sudden, from such desperate darkness, rush into such light ! to see you, who but yesterday despised the whole thing so thoroughly, now admitted to the full joy and privilege of a child of God, while I can still only look, and long, and feebly strain after some little glimpse of heaven—all this seems to throw me back, fathoms deep into the shade ; as if I had but little part in the thoughts, or heart of God !”

“ It is not so, St. Clair ! I am sure it is not so ! I feel convinced that you are much, much higher in God’s love than I am. His mercy has indeed been wonderful to me, but what—what have I done for Him ? What has my life been but one dark offence against Him ? Oh ! I cannot bear to think of it !” And he turned away in great agitation.

“ It is marvellous indeed,” I said, “ that He should have stooped to think of either of us. His mercy being so great, makes our sin the greater ; and at times I feel quite wretched from the sense of it, and the dread that I can never be fit for heaven, so never get there. It seems

such a frightful thing to sin again and again as I do."

"Don't you remember a short prayer, St. Clair, that I found written, and laid in your Bible: 'Accept me Lord as I am, and make me such as Thou wouldst have me to be?'"

"Yes," I replied; "Mary wrote it for me, and I put it where you found it to-night, that I might always remember to use it."

"Well! my belief, St. Clair, is, that God has accepted you as you are, and is making you—and quickly too—'such as He would have you to be.' I even, see an immense difference in you!"

"Do you?" I exclaimed—cheered for the moment. "It was much needed."

"Yes! we shall all need mending, to our lives end. But what I feel is, that all our mending can never take us to heaven, but that Christ has done that by His own all-perfect merit; which needs indeed no mending, and no change! I must try now and work for Him, for He has done all my work for me, and made me His eternal debtor."

## CHAPTER XV.

Much eloquent thought, and many a cheering word  
Refreshed the thirsting heart like early dew.

TEGNÈR—(BETHUNE'S TRANSL.)

Lord! Thou know'st full well  
The love I bear to Thee;  
Let thy spirit dwell  
Undebased in me.  
Let love of glory, gold, and sin depart,  
Out of thy kingdom, in my blameless heart.

TEGNÈR—(BETHUNE'S TRANSL.)

SOON after this conversation Bruce and I were requested to go into General Sydney's cabin. The kind old man had no idea of the penance he was imposing on Bruce; but it was, I saw, a very trying moment for him.

In answer to the General's thanks he stammered something of his "deserving nothing but blame;"

and turning towards Mary who also thanked him, he hurriedly pressed the hand she held out to him to his lips, and abruptly left the cabin.

I had not liked to approach her whilst he was there; but the moment he was gone, I was at her side.

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As we were still talking over the late events, we were called up to take a first view of a long ridge of blue land, just visible in the offing; which, when we had mounted on deck, I pointed out to Mary as the country of her father, and her own future home. She seemed affected, as she fixed her eyes upon it.

“Had she sorrowful forebodings of what might befall her there?” I asked; as she looked so sad.

“No,” she replied; “I merely felt as I approached those new scenes, that yearning towards the home of my childhood, which I cannot always repress. No! I have no forebodings of evil, but have all happiness to look forward to there.”

How many delightful schemes did we plan for ourselves! Day-dreams of happiness! real to the heart!

I told her then of the astonishing change that had taken place in Bruce's feelings; an account which filled her with surprise and delight. I

mentioned too, the despondency that his rapid progress in the faith of the gospel, had produced in my mind; and of the generous and kindly manner in which he had endeavoured to cheer me.

“I am sure that he is right,” she said; “and that your earnest desire to know the truth, and fearless acting up to the knowledge you already have, are as much a proof of God’s love, as his quick-sprung zeal and faith can be; for God says: ‘With this man will I dwell, even with him that is of a lowly and a contrite heart, and that trembleth at my word.’ You do that, Wilfred, surely! And then remember that it is said: ‘If any man will do the will of my Father, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be true or not.’ Your will is, I am sure, to do God’s will.”

“I think I may truly say,” I replied, “that it is; so I ought to be able to trust Him. Times and seasons are I know in His hands; and when He thinks it best that I should clearly see my way, He will no doubt send light from heaven to guide me. Now, I must trust Him blindfold, as an infant trusts its mother.”

“Yes!” she exclaimed; “He is expanding the powers of faith, and trust, and love in you now, my dear Wilfred; and soon the ‘Spirit that

bloometh where it listeth,' will waft knowledge also into your soul !”

How soothingly her words always fell upon my ear ! I often felt tempted to exclaim in her own mellifluous tongue :

“ Al labbro tuo, chi diede  
Tanta dolcezza ?”

But “ of a spirit pure and musical they were the pure and musical expression.” Her voice too was so exquisite ! It was “ a portion of her beauty.”

“ Like music to the heart it came.”

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We scudded up Channel under easy sail ; and glad I was to near the shores of England again. To me the thought of being there was indeed delightful ; for I knew that then I could be constantly with Mary, without having our mutual happiness damped by the sight either of the love, or the hate of others.

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General Sydney had no very near relations left ; and his long stay on the continent, and the little intercourse he had kept up with any of his friends in England, had made him nearly a

stranger in his own country, which nevertheless as the land of his birth, he desired to return to, and see once more. As therefore the time for his disembarkation drew near, he felt anxious as to what point he should turn his steps.

I had heard long before from my mother, in answer to the letter in which I had told her of my engagement, when she had expressed her delight at the prospect of my happiness, and her anxiety to become acquainted with Mary; and a little while before we started on our homeward voyage, I had received another letter from her, saying that she was going to stay for some time at Dover; and that it was there she wished me to go as soon as my ship was paid off. I mentioned this to Mary, saying what an immense happiness it would be to me, if they would also go there; where they could become acquainted with my mother, and we could be constantly together. She agreed in thinking that it would be very delightful, and mentioned it to her father. He had been quartered there many years before, and various pleasant recollections it seemed, were attached to the place. He moreover felt rather desolate in returning to a land of strangers; and seemed to like the idea of going immediately near some one who he thought would feel an

interest in him ; and having often expressed his desire to become acquainted with my mother, was well pleased that the opportunity should present itself so soon.

The plan therefore met with his entire approval ; and as our ship was to go into dock at Woolwich for repairs, he asked Captain Normanton if it would inconvenience him, for them to be landed either from the Downs, or if possible, at Dover. Captain Normanton could not refuse ; though it was evident he did not like losing their society so soon ; and it was therefore agreed that it should be so.

It really pained me to see the exceeding annoyance that he felt at this arrangement. His attentions never for a moment relaxed towards Mary ; it seemed indeed intolerable to him to be separated from her for a moment. First she must come up and look at the Plymouth Breakwater ; then admire the sloping lawns, and the woods feathering almost to the water's edge in the beautiful grounds of Mount Edgecumbe. Then it was Portland Isle — the Needles — the cheerful shores of the Isle of Wight — Portsmouth ! anything in short, and everything which could form an excuse for drawing *her* forth, whose loved presence was so soon to depart from him.

It was sad to see his almost frantic devotion to her ; a devotion which seemed to live upon her coldness, and grow upon her avoidance. There was something so intense in his feeling, that it took an almost heroic character in my eyes ; and even those among us who used to laugh most upon the subject, now treated with respect a sentiment so strong and deep.

I kept out of the way as much as I could get myself to do ; and Bruce and I were much together. His happy hope still glowed brightly in his breast ; and often imparted a portion of its warmth to my heart also. Great indeed was the change in his feelings ; and I could have listened to him for ever as he spoke of the love of God, and the joy of salvation. But he could not as yet bring those high feelings down to the things of earth ; nor see that they were intended to regulate the whole man, from the greatest to the least emotion of his heart. He would continue his strong, often offensive way of speaking of persons, and things ; always for instance, calling the Captain : “ that fellow ;” and Palgrave : “ that brute ;” declaring in answer to any remonstrances, that the Captain *was* a “ fellow,” and Palgrave *was* a “ brute !” Yet could he have hoped to do them spiritual good, he would have exerted himself night and day in their service.

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How various are the ways by which God leads men's souls to His reconciled love, and "teaches them in His way." Bruce had been as it were, almost without one wistful look, one longing aspiration, by the power of a mighty arm, snatched from the overwhelming flood. For a moment only, he had felt the deadly Maelstrom guilt of sin whirling him down to destruction; but the next he had been upborne in safety; and triumphantly planted on the "baseless rock of ages." He had attained salvation, before he had made one step in reformation; and all the sanctifying work of the Spirit, had therefore to be begun in him; and borne away even as his ardent heart was, by the flaming love of God, conscious too as he was of the high aim set before him, it was yet long ere he learnt that the ways of the godly amongst his fellow-men should ever be "ways of pleasantness," and "paths of peace;" and that he ought to endeavour to "adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things."

I, on the contrary, was still in mighty darkness. I had begun with the rudiments—the very first letter of spirituality, and gone gradually on, yet without knowing to what glorious heights such teaching was to lead me. My soul, and heart, and mind had all become elevated and refined by inter-

course with her I loved, and by inhaling the pure atmosphere of heaven with which she seemed ever surrounded ; but as yet, no one doctrine of Christ was clearly revealed to my understanding. Yet my conscience had become wakeful ; and I could not but watch over myself lest I should offend that High Being whose purity was one of the things which made His blessed idea so very precious to me ; and continual were my endeavours, not only to pluck from my heart all that could displease Him, but to cherish every high and holy aspiration that might bring me nearer to His divine nature. Yes ! “ Pure should be the eyes destined to behold the King on His throne. Pure should be the hands destined to strike the harp of His praise. Pure should be the feet destined to walk the golden streets of the New Jerusalem.”

This “diversity of operation by the self-same Spirit,” in those who are saved, should, I think, make us cautious in judging and condemning others, because they cannot always see the same things, at the same moment, in the same way as ourselves. Providing a man be really in earnest to serve God for His love's sake, and place all his trust in Christ—he is sure of coming to salvation ; and though he may not walk by the same hedge-side, or touch one blade of grass, or grain of dust

that we do—yet, if he be travelling the same road, he must attain the same end; and why should we be at enmity with those by the way, whom we hope to meet in an eternity of never-ending happiness? — whom we hope to call “friends” when these feeble bodies of death shall be put off, and we shall all be perfected in Christ Jesus?

“Think not that that which seemeth right to thee,  
Must needs be so for all men. Thou can’st see  
Footprints of light upon the world’s high-way,  
Left there by Him who had not where to lay  
His lowly head—the plainest nearest thee.  
There may be footprints which thou cans’t not see,  
Made plain by Heaven’s light to other men.  
Jesus went many ways into Jerusalem !”

## CHAPTER XVI.

The human heart ! that restless thing !  
The tempter, and the tried ;  
The haughty, yet the suffering,  
The child of Pain, and Pride ;  
The buoyant and the desolate ;  
The home of Love, the lair of Hate.

ANON.

Marvel not at life—Patience shall see,  
The perfect work of wisdom to her given.  
Hold fast thy soul through His high mystery,  
And it shall lead thee to the gates of Heaven.

MRS. BUTLER.

THE day at length arrived for General Sydney and his daughter to leave the vessel. We were already off the point of Dungeness, and the white cliffs of Dover came in sight. The packages were all on deck, ready for removal ; and a bright sun, and gentle wind, offered no hope to Captain

Normanton of being able to delay their disembarkation. I could not bear to see his agitation as the hour approached; and if I left the deck and went below, there I found Bruce much in the same state; though with this difference, that with him there was the blank of utter hopelessness, while with the other a determined hope gave battle still, and would not be driven from the field. He seemed resolved to leave no chance untried to obtain his object; and torn by disappointment, and maddened with jealousy, he yet seemed determined never to abandon the point. He asked General Sydney's leave to visit him at Dover as soon as his duties would allow him time, and the old man, not having the least idea of the feelings which prompted his assiduity, and being extremely grateful for all the kindness he really had received from him, was warm in his hospitable expressions, and encouraged him by all means to come and visit them as soon, and as often as possible; assuring him of the extreme pleasure it would give both him and his daughter to see him at any time.

I was present when he said this one day; and I saw that Captain Normanton looked anxiously at Mary for a confirmation of her father's words. She was looking down at first, busied with something in her hand; but conscious that his eyes

were on her, she looked up and murmured something indistinctly civil, not to vex her father; though the expression of her eye must have spoken in a language far more plain, and less pleasing to Captain Normanton. His answering look I shall never forget; it was not one of entreaty, or tenderness, or regret, but of appalling determination—of smiling defiance—from which I saw her shrink in terror, while her cheek grew blanched beneath his eye. I saw that he had the fell determination of pursuing her unrelentingly; and doubtless her father's pressing offers and encouragements gave him the idea that in him he should find an irresistible ally. I could scarcely remain a quiet spectator of the scene, so displeasing and intollerable was the expression of his countenance. Yet I dared not interpose, dreading to add to Mary's discomfort instead of relieving it.

Dungeness Point was passed—and then Folkestone, and the line of Martello towers; and the time could not longer be delayed for ordering the boat to be in readiness, and the ship's head to be turned so as to stand in a little for the bay. The wind was so light that we lay almost becalmed. The boat was lowered, amid a painful silence, for the principal actors in the scene seemed but little disposed to speak, and all the rest were intently

watching that which has ever so strong and fascinating an interest for all men : the working of human passions, and the play of human feelings. As my eye rested in turn on the many faces assembled round, there was scarcely a look that was not bent with intent scrutiny either on Captain Normanton's agitated countenance, or on the pale face of the fair girl who stood there the object of his sad devotion.

She too was troubled ; for she felt the pain of parting, perhaps for ever, from those who had been so kind and attentive to her comfort and wishes ; for there was not one in the whole ship, as I have said before, that had not felt the magic of her presence among them ; and who would not have done anything to serve or please her.

All was in readiness, and the men seated at their oars, when Captain Normanton desired Bruce to go down and see that everything was stowed away properly in the boat. Bruce started at receiving this order ; and turning very pale, looked towards me, as if he feared I might be disappointed, or displeased at his going. But I never had the least idea that the Captain would have wished for my company ; and I only regretted Bruce's having to go, because I knew it would be an additional trial to him. I nodded to him, however, with a

smile, which seemed to set his mind so far at ease ; and he descended the ship's side to do as he had been ordered. Captain Normanton seemed to feel some apology due for not taking me, as I was *par excellence* the friend of the Sydneys, for he spoke to me, and made some trifling excuse.

I bowed ; and all being now in readiness, General Sydney and his daughter turned to take leave of their friends. Mary spoke kindly to all, and particularly distinguished young D'Arcy and Palgrave ; the former, because she really loved the boy ; the latter, because she felt a magnanimous desire to be kind to one who had offended me ; as well as really feeling a pity for the poor fellow, as no one had been very cordial to him since the day of the affray. He seemed much touched by her kindness ; and I felt convinced, that if ever he were again inclined to kick the Bible up to the beams, the remembrance of Mary's gently-rebuking kindness would deter him from it a thousand times more than all my violence. No wiser fable than that of the " Wind and the Sun !"

Mary had hold of her father's arm ; but Captain Normanton, as she was about to descend, begged her to take his. She did so, but turned at the top of the stair to say " Farewell !" to me. That word

was all that passed, and we shook hands and parted (but for a little time, as we hoped); yet even that short farewell was more than the Captain's patience could stand. He hurried her down, and placing her in the boat, where Bruce had to receive her, seated himself by her side, after having seen the old General safe in also; and all being quickly arranged, the oars fell into the water, and the boat began rapidly moving towards the shore.

As Mary had looked up to me on mounting the ship's side on the waters of the blue Mediterranean, beneath the bright sun of her own native land, so did she now look up from that boat as it darted over the green waves that washed the cloudy shores of England; and as I staid watching it till it entered the harbour, and was hid from sight by the pier, I could not but compare my own state then, with what it was before; and with earnest gratitude did I thank the Almighty for the great change which I felt had taken place in me; a change which, though coming I knew wholly from Him, was yet instrumentally owing to her. The foundation of all my ideas was changed; and my soul was enlarged by continually dwelling in His presence, who fills all space; and though even then, and for long after, my views of Christ's re-

demption were very clouded, still my heart was full of His love; while His joy made everything seem radiant about me.

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When Bruce returned on board he seemed completely spirit-broken. I had not the heart to speak to him; but in the evening he went with me into our berth, saying he must talk to me.

"It is very odd," he exclaimed, after having sat some time in silence, "that I should always come to you to pour out my miseries—you who are the cause of them! However, so it is!—I've tried to rouse myself from this horrible despondency; but it falls on me again and again, like dark, dark night. How wrong it is to love anything on this deadly earth as I love her, whom I shall never see again! What a life this is! Oh! St. Clair, I don't know what's come over me—I feel sick to death. I cannot pray. I believe it is that, which makes me so madly miserable. I cannot even wish to be resigned; I can only feel a heavy longing to die. Life is so weary! so very, very weary! Speak to me, St. Clair," he said at last impatiently, for I had been sitting by him, with a feeling as of guilt, unable to say one word, unable even to meet his eye, though I could not but watch his disturbed countenance; "speak to me, or I shall

go mad. Can you find nothing to say? you—out of your detested store of insufferable happiness?”

“You know full well,” I replied, “that it is that which chains my tongue, and clogs my heart, so that I dare not speak. What can I say, unless it is to beg you to implore of God to speak to you Himself, with His voice of comfort, and His strengthening grace.”

“It is useless now,” he murmured, as he grasped my hand; “I feel as if I could not go to Him now; there is such a tearing, distracting misery in what I feel. I should like to do something desperate; rush out to wilds and deserts—throw myself from rocks—howl to the waves—shriek to the winds—anything that might relieve the fire and fury that rages within; while here I am, imprisoned where two strides carry me from wall to wall; surrounded by creatures who know as little of the torments I endure, as the gull in the shrouds, or the porpoise under our keel. You too! the only one I can speak to—the only one who *could* feel as I feel—what care you about it? You are separated you’ll say! but only for a moment. In heart you are one, and soon in fate.”

“I cannot bear to see you in this state,” I exclaimed; “yet you must know, Bruce, how almost impossible it is for *me* to speak of comfort.”

“Oh! I know it—I know it, my good fellow!” he replied, swinging himself restlessly backwards and forwards. “Then why I, of all creation, was to be chosen to go on shore with her! I, who never on any occasion wish to ‘be in the same boat, with that fellow. But he always contrives to do everything he shouldn’t.”

“It was a mark of favour, so you must not quarrel with him for that,” I replied; marvelling that his mind in the midst of all its agonies could stop to make a joke.

“And then—couldn’t I have drowned him in the harbour! there was something so insufferable in his manner towards her! I feel of course a great deal about her liking you best, but that is all right and natural; and I will say for you, that you ‘bear your honours so meekly,’ that few but such a wretchedly irritable fellow as I am, could be angry with you. But there was something in that man’s manner towards her to-day, that was beyond all sufferance. He had, I fancy, got encouragement from the old General’s pressing invitations; and there was a triumph in his deep, dark eye, as he turned to her, and said in a low voice—though I caught his words: ‘I shall hope that my visits will be as acceptable to Miss Sydney as to her

father'—for which I could have slain him ! I expected he would have been miserable ; and had been giving him what pity I could spare from myself ; but not a bit of it ! he seemed quite a changed being after the old man's civil speeches, and when away from your basilisk presence."

"I had observed something, of that manner of his on board," I replied ; "and would that the time were come when I might free Mary from such harassment ! I wonder the old General doesn't give leave for our engagement to be known. However ere very long I trust it will be more than an engagement."

"I pray God sincerely," said Bruce, "that you may not have trouble yet, before you get into port. That fellow is bent on mischief—I am sure of it ; and will leave no stone unturned to throw you over, and put himself in your place. He's capable of anything in my opinion. Now do let me abuse him,"—seeing I was about to interrupt him ; "it is the only thing that does me good just now. I must hate—or love—and anything but that !"

"But I cannot let you say what I am sure is not so," I replied. "Iv'e no spare love to spend on our Captain, as you may suppose ; but

though a hard, and selfish man, I believe him to be as far above a dishonourable action as any one in creation."

"Aye, anything that his dictionary explains as dishonourable, perhaps. But could any one with only a quarter of an eye in his head, not have perceived that you and Miss Sydney were engaged. Do you suppose that the coxswain and powder-monkey didn't see it?—that the pigs, and chickens did not see it? Never tell me that that man of the lynx-eye didn't see, and smell, and taste, and hear, and feel it! Why was the old General always near enough, and never too near? Why were you the only one to talk with her by the hour together, and soothe her when sad tears would sometimes flow? In your innocence I suppose, you thought yourselves unperceived—alone in a desert! but let me tell you that one divinity amid a thousand worshippers does not love, or weep unnoticed. No! St. Clair; depend upon it, your 'secret' is thoroughly known by the whole ship's crew; and I may say, as thoroughly respected—save and except by one; and that one—I say it again and again—would, and will—you'll see—do all that man or fiend can do to get her from you."

"Well! I have no apprehension. 'Faythe

hathe no feare,' as the old motto says; and my faith is as firm in her love as in my own; and no shadow of fear can cross that."

"Oh! I don't fear her changing," said Bruce gloomily. "Married, or not married, she'll never love but you! I wonder why there is so much misery in the world!"

"It puzzles me often," I replied; "but thinking does not help one to answer. We shall know it all by and bye, and see it all to have been right.

"'Providence is dark in its permissions; yet one day when all is known,

The universe of reason will acknowledge how just and good they were.'"

A few years, Bruce, and all these stirring commotions of our souls will be at rest. That thought often stills the throbbings of my heart. Don't let us forsake our true comfort, and our true Comforter will never forsake us. Raise your heart but for one moment to His high and tranquil presence, and all these tumults and miseries will subside into 'a great calm.' Try it, my good fellow, it never fails. Think of the words of God which you read first in this very place; and remember how fully then He took the 'trouble from your heart.'"

“That is true,” he said, as he leant his head upon his hand; “and thank you for reminding me of it. Yes! God is the very source of peace; and the further we swerve from Him, the more we are—and justly—troubled; but for a time the old habit of unrestrained feeling got the better of me. Yes! This trial as you say, will pass away—at least with life!—while the blessed things I have learnt of late will last for ever! There! they are calling you; go up; I’ll come soon.”

I answered the call; and soon after Bruce followed me. The cloud had passed from his heart; and inward peace shone out again from his clear blue eye.

“It is wonderful certainly,” he said, as he joined me, and we walked on deck together, “what a perfect change takes place in one’s internal life, when one really rises to the presence of God. There is a lightness about one then, body and soul, which makes one seem to go buoyantly over the things of earth, as if they were powerless to move or arrest one. I feel now like the diver who has cut away the weights which kept him down; and who has sprung up to light and free air again. There is indeed ‘no limit unto prayer.’”

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We had passed the bluff South Foreland, and those traitorous sands, rich with the spoil of thousands! and went gallantly on before a fresh breeze, which brought us quickly to our destination. A few days after, the ship was paid off, and I found myself on the road to Dover.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Silent—abandoned now—yet in its day,  
Oft has it trembled to the legion's tramp ;  
Oft heard the consul's signal-clarion play—  
The hoarse centurion shout—Numidian chargers neigh.

H. L. L.

Where the green waters rolled their waves,  
And free winds fanned thy cheek ;—blue Alps—  
The morn—nature—and starry skies—  
These were the nurses of our love !

THE old road to Dover ! A road travelled generally without any romantic feelings ; merely as one of the great mediums of communication between London and—the world ! Yet not all the roads in existence can present to the mind, worldly recollections like that ! What various floods of mighty interest have swept along its course ! The armies of the glorious Roman, and those of our second conqueror, thronged and trampled

down the way. The gallant victors of Cressy, and of Agincourt, with their high chivalry, and belted knights, all passed along it; and thousands of great, and brave, and noble hearts have year after year swelled the mighty list of those who have swept along its course, till the hand of Fame points to *Him* who left his country an almost unknown and an untitled man, and who returned at last with the ducal coronet on his brow, and a name whose glorious renown was borne from "Indus to the Pole!"

I could not but think of those things, as I passed along; of the many wondrous sights which those silent fields, and unchanged hills and valleys had beheld; and I longed that some graphic pen should bring them all out in stirring life, and bright reality before the mind.

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It was yet early summer; and the leaves by the road-side, were still in their brightest green; the air was soft and I was very happy! Yet as I got near my journey's end,—spite of my impatience to see those from whom but a short half hour now separated me, I could willingly have paused a moment to admire the scene, which on turning the hill near Dover, presented itself: the rich wooded valley, with the sea beyond—and farther

still the high white cliffs of France ; on the left, the vast outline of the fine old castle crowning the hill, and on the right the heights and batteries of the Fortification. Accustomed as my eye had been so long to the glories of the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Apennines ! I could not yet see without delight, these humbler beauties of my native isle.

Arrived at Dover, I soon found out my mother's house. She was at home, and I flew into her arms with a joy till then unknown. My feelings towards her were so different from what they had ever been before, that I could hardly believe that she was the same mother as formerly, or that I was the same son who had left her three years before with so much indifference. I found her looking no older than before, and so well ! And her happiness in seeing me seemed unbounded. She could but weep for joy ; for the affectionate style of my late letters, and the pleasure I showed at being with her again, satisfied at length the deep love which had been so continually pained and disappointed before ; and made her feel that I was now indeed a son. How I grieved when she afterwards told me how unhappy my indifference had made her ! How I mourned over the thought that her solitary life had been a sad and sorrowing one, not only from having lost the love of the

dead, but from having missed the love of the living ; and how thankful was I, that time was still left me in which I might prove my repentance, and show the joy that I had in cheering her, and making the remainder of her life pass joyously by !

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It is the phraseology of books to talk of “ youth ” and “ tenderness ” as almost synonymous terms ; and I have heard it said, “ Where are we to look for consideration, if not in the young ? ” “ In the old—decidedly in the old. In the young last of all.” In all natures, the seeds of tenderness are sown ; for all natures retain somewhat of the image of God, —most tender—most compassionate ! and in some few they seem indeed the chosen plants of the soil. But in most, they have their place only in common with pride, and selfishness, and wilfulness, and above all, thoughtlessness ; and these last often, for a time, spring so rank and strong, that they crush, if they cannot wholly destroy the other more gentle occupants of the soil. Experience it is which oftenest teaches the heart to feel ; when we have suffered, then we know what suffering is, and can feel for it in others, and watch to alleviate it. With me indeed, by a blessed exception, it was the sense of happiness,—the hand of love, which had opened the heart-stores of feeling ; but

it is not often so. Some in their infancy have those around them so gentle and so wise, that from their own small stock of infant griefs they are taught to sympathise in the griefs of others ; —from the loss of bird or flower, to estimate the heavier sorrows of the human breast. But healthy, happy children, without this teaching, know not, and think not of these things. They are blythe as the bee, light as the wind, and the voice of suffering if heard, is not understood by them.

Such had been the case with me. My father and mother had been devotedly attached to each other ; and had lived so almost exclusively for each other, that even I, though an only child, never for a moment interfered with their mutual devotion. I was greatly beloved, and the object of their fondest care ; and was always with them. But I was never, that I recollect, much talked to or instructed by either of them. I was their bird, their butterfly, their joy ! a thing to dance around them, or run by their side, or fly gaily before them,—but nothing else. Filled with each other, I seemed more as an addition, an ornament to their happiness than an integral portion of it. I was gay, and had scarcely a temptation to outward sin, for my cheerfulness made me easily contented ; and their boundless kindness supplied my every want,

and pleasure. The best of everything was always given to me. The brightest and sunniest spot in all the garden was selected for my operations, instead of the dark nook, over-shaded by trees, and matted with roots, which is usually apportioned to such youthful gardeners ; selected with the view, it would seem, of disgusting them betimes with the labours of floriculture, or initiating them early in the charms of disappointment.

Often would I find fresh playthings, I had never thought of perhaps, by my side ; and Fortunatus' cap scarce brought its wearer the objects of his wishes with greater promptitude, than the least of mine were gratified by the active love of my parents. It was now the bleat of a young lamb, now the low cooing of a dove, or the cheerful song of a favourite bird, that would rouse me up in the pleasant summer days ;—ephemeral wishes perhaps of the dreamy evening before, brought as a sweet surprise to greet my waking eyes ! Yet I never thought of the love which provided them, nor was I taught to do so ; I kissed my thanks—was enchanted and flew away to enjoy—my playthings and—myself.

At length a dark and dreary change took place. An almost sudden illness stretched my poor father in his coffin, and my mother was from that hour

a stricken being. I wept for my own loss, for I loved my father dearly; but of my mother's loss in him I never thought; and she was too sweet and feeling to remind me of it. Thrown now first upon each other for everything, at this dismal time, we found how little we could suffice each other, and felt our loneliness the more. We had been together as a loving mother, and a happy child, but as companions—never. The intercourse of mind between us had been nought; and we could not begin it now, when the only themes would have been suffering and grief. Her tears distressed me, because they made *me* feel sorry and unhappy; but they never suggested to me the idea that I might lighten *her* sorrow, and soothe *her* unhappiness.

After sitting by her perhaps, for a while, in embarrassed silence, or standing with my arm round her neck, as she pressed me to her poor heart, and wept over me tears of unutterable anguish, I would make any little excuse for going away; and gladly avail myself of her permission to run out and amuse myself; and I felt as if a weight of lead were off my spirits, when the door closed, and I was free, and alone again. Yet, sad for myself, I would often sit down on the stump of some old tree, or in my garden barrow, and weep for *my*

loss in him who had so often shared my pleasant labours with me ; for *my* loss was great !

Had any one at that time spoken to me of my mother's sufferings, and shown me how to act so as to make her happier, or told me only how to show the love I really had for her, I am sure that I should gladly have listened, and have felt a child's eager pleasure in the thought of being of use to her ; and I can never forget my sensations, when Mary's blessed hand, in our very first conversation, touched this string. How instantly my heart responded to it ! and what an agony of self-reproach flashed over me, as she said : "How sad she must be, living all alone." But no such hand, or such voice was near me in my childhood ; and I was left in the untutored selfishness of a thoughtless, but not loveless nature, to follow the wild dictates of each passing fancy.

The reserve between me and my mother, seemed continually to increase at that time, till, seeing I suppose, that I was not happy, and feeling perhaps that she knew not how to make me so, she asked me one day if I should like to go to school. I felt my whole being brighten at the thought, and I answered with a joyful "Yes !" She burst into tears !

I remember wondering at the time, what could make her do so, but I can understand it now fully.

Well! I went to school; *that* was not the place to learn feeling, especially towards a mother! I then went to sea—a not much better place; though perhaps a shade! But Mary's blessed hand opened my heart to all love.

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My now, dear, mother and I, had not been many minutes together at Dover before we spoke of her; and the joy I felt at hearing her praises of her was great indeed!

"She came to me," she said, "the very day of her arrival; feeling, as she told me with her little foreign accent, and simplicity of manner, that she knew she should be welcome then, for your sake, and hoped soon to be so for her own."

She was indeed most welcome from the first moment for her own dear sake!

I could but hug my mother to my heart as she spoke of her; wondering too at the change in my feelings towards her, so different from what they had ever been before!

"If you owe a daughter to me, my dearest mother," I exclaimed; "you owe a son I am sure to her; for I feel that till now I never loved

you as I ought, or valued enough your love to me. Now it seems the crown and seal of all my happiness—and I am so happy ! But where are they living ? for the General told me they had not yet settled on a house.”

“Next door.”

“Next door ! Oh ! I must go then.”

“I think you had better stay just now,” she replied quietly.

I was about to feel vexed and impatient as of old, when I detected a little smile on my mother’s lips ; and following the direction of her eye, I saw Mary herself coming in at the little gate of the garden. She looked up and nodded smilingly at seeing my mother at the window ; but she did not see me.

The sensations that filled my mind at that moment are ill to be defined. Simple, boundless happiness at the sight of that ever-beloved countenance was the first feeling ; but the next was troubled—I know not what to call it—for language is poor in following sensations ; especially when they are of a mixed and contradictory kind, like those which then rushed through my mind. How shall I express them ?

Hitherto our intercourse had been such as was

congenial to a love so pure, so true, so devoted as ours; and the tinge of romance which had accompanied it, had added not a little to its charm. We had met in the flame, and parted on the flood! and all our intermediate intercourse had been accompanied by refined and elevating associations. Her own bright skies, flowers, trees, light, shade, the fresh breeze, the rolling waters!—nature in all her purest beauty, and highest sublimity, had till then surrounded us when together; and exquisite as the thought of her must ever have been to me under all circumstances, still its charm had been undoubtedly enhanced by the framework of enchanting, extrinsic beauty, which had ever surrounded her image in my mind.

Now, she was on the Marine Parade of a fashionable watering-place! Feathers, and flowers, and frills, and flounces, fluttered on the walk; and ceaseless groups were sauntering up and down. I don't mean to abuse people who walk in such places: I have walked in them myself, though never much liking them; and doubtless many good, and amiable beings were amongst those who were there that day, enjoying the sea-air, and the sight of their fellow-creatures. But yet!

—Oh! if on that moonlit-night off Port Mahon I had, as I remember doing,

“ Wished that littleisle had wings,  
And we within its fairy bowers  
Were wafted off to seas unknown ;”

how much more did I now wish to fly with her from all that noise and bustle of the world which had such a ‘ disenchantant ’ effect upon my mind. A miserable sort of feeling seemed to chill my heart, and I felt as if *my* Mary were lost to me for ever !

My mother seeing I did not fly down to meet her, as she naturally expected I should, said in much surprise :

“ Will you not open the door for her, Wilfred ? We dispense with knocking here.”

Roused in a moment from my brief, painful reverie, I rushed down stairs, and was again in her presence. Then—parade, feathers, flounces, all had vanished from my mind, and Mary was again, as ever—*my* Mary !

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After a while I left her with my mother, and went to see the old General. Though but a few days had elapsed since I had seen him, I

thought I observed a considerable change. He complained much of the glare, and noise of the place; and seemed so dissatisfied with everything about him, that I began to feel quite guilty, at having been the means of persuading him to come there. But at last on mentioning my mother, he started into all his old vivacity of manner; and launched forth in her praise in a way that set my mind quite at ease; saying that her being there made up for everything else; and that he felt quite happy to think, that when he was gone, his child would have a friend and mother, so wise, and kind, and good; "one who would take much more care of her" he added, good-humouredly, "than her harum-scarum son would ever do."

We all dined together of course, every evening; and in the mornings too we were always together. We had much enjoyment; but still it was scarcely the same as before.

Dover was not in those days what it is now. The ground now covered by handsome houses between the Parade and the Pier was then a rope-walk; while the Castle Cliffs were visible from base to crown; never dreaming that the temerity of man would lead him—as it has since done—to seek his dwelling by their rugged sides, and beneath their beetling brows. The Marine Parade houses

were therefore the only ones for visitors which faced the sea, and the publicity of the situation was very disagreeable ; it being impossible to leave one's house without coming into the midst of whatever bustle and gaiety the place afforded. We knew not a soul there happily ; but still we craved for loneliness and quiet. I could not but see that Mary was much admired ; and though that was gratifying to my vanity and affection, yet altogether it grated on my feelings, and kept me in a state of irritation to which I was little inclined by nature.

“Hitherto had Mary's face and mind,  
Like holy mysteries lain enshrined ;”

and though the observations that I overheard were of course complimentary, they were still often too familiarly worded, to suit the deep respect that accompanied every feeling of my heart towards her. On board our ship, she had indeed been among admiring men ; but they had all regarded her with absolute veneration ; and she had trod the deck as a creature who seemed to be of a higher order than the rough but manly spirits by whom she was surrounded.

And yet Dover was beautiful ! and when we got into the country—far as it was before we could get there—or mounted the Castle-hill, or the Western

Heights, or Shakspeare's Cliff—then it was real enjoyment ! How magnificent was the view from those high places ! taking in such a sweep of watery waste ; and how pure and exhilarating the air, compared to what it was below in the valley ! I never mounted to them, but a line I had met with somewhere came most animatingly into my mind :

“ Sur les monts de la foi, l'air est toujours serein.”

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To call it a “ watery waste ” that we looked upon, was however a great injustice. If the Dover road was, as I have said, the most storied of all those that scar the face of the earth, so were the rushing waters that divide us but by a few short miles from our “ natural *friend* ”—the most abundant of all old Ocean's domains in recollections, activity, and importance. From the moment that the Phœnician first sought us as the “ Cassiterides,” to the time when I was looking on their sparkling surface, the waters of our Channel have ever been fraught with enterprise, whether of commerce, of science, or of warlike exploit !

That wondrous Power too, which has since made silent and solitary the highway of the Roman, was just at the period of which I am speaking, beginning to display its mighty force upon the

waters ; and in addition to the flags of all nations, and sails of all kinds which ceaselessly occupied the busy winds, and drove the keel through the green waves of the Channel, were now to be traced the arrow-like motion, and diverging wake of the “ Steamer ;” forcing its way against wind and tide, and floating its long *panache* of smoke and steam, far down upon the wind.

In point of beauty, it is not of course to be compared to any sailing vessel ; but its strenuous, majestic, self-impelling action, is magnificent ! The things which retard vessels which are dependant upon outward influences, have but little effect on them ; and they rush on, against wind, against tide, unswerving from their course, and outstripping all around them, with a fearlessness of self-will, which it fills one with energy and courage merely to behold.

We were observing them one morning, as several having waited for the tide, came rushing out, one after the other from the harbour—each of them, the moment it had passed the pier, and got free of the bar, separating its course from the others, and darting like an arrow to the point of its particular destination ; and we were struck by their being so true an emblem of the Christian—actuated, by a power *in* them, but not

of them: and uninfluenced by outward circumstances, going tranquilly, but boldly forward in the path assigned, never turning back, or stopping, till they had reached the 'haven where they would be.'

Ah! it was delightful to have such things before one's eyes, and such thoughts within one's heart! and for hours together did we sometimes watch untired the beauty of that tranquilly-busy scene; and spite of the first painful impression that it gave me, and the continual unpleasantness of having to live so much *en évidence* during our short stay at Dover—ininitely precious and delightful are the recollections which embalm its memory to me!

Beyond the Castle jetty however, we found almost perfect solitude. The cliffs too were so fine there! and when the tide was out, the vast extent of low rocks, almost wholly covered with sea-weed, formed by their rich hues of purple and green, a beautiful relief and contrast to the cold, white colouring of the chalky heights above. How we used to enjoy ourselves on those rocks! walking over the miniature crags,—intersected by numbers of tiny streams, running their clear shining courses in every direction, and forming each its own little ravine, whose sides were either clad with the brightest verdure, or cut into little

“fiords,” and headlands, perfect in their miniature beauty ! And not only did Mary and I enjoy them, but my mother also would often be tempted there by our glowing descriptions of the ‘romantic scenery’ to be found ; for her heart, long desolate and depressed under the weight of solitude and sorrow, seemed to have become quite young and buoyant again, under the warm affection of her two children,—both, alas ! equally new-found.

The old General did not attempt such venturous doings, but used to sit basking on the shore ; either occupying himself with some book, or dreamily watching the rippling of the waters. Indeed at no time of his life, would such things have had charms for him. In youth he liked better the active bustle of the camp and court ; and now poor old man ! he seemed to have but little enjoyment in anything. Yet it is not age, which takes away our love of simple pleasures, when once it has existed ; it outwears the mere lapse of years ;—it is only sorrow.

Notwithstanding however these maritime amusements of ours, we still sighed for perfect quiet, and the country ; and a pleasantly situated house in the neighbourhood, at Buckland, becoming vacant, it was agreed that we should take it jointly, and live there together for a few months. This

was perhaps a primitive arrangement which might have seemed odd in the eyes of the world ; but it seemed not so to us in our simplicity.

Then there came a period of happiness, indeed ! greater than I can describe.

England, it is true, has not the unspeakable charm, the heart-thrilling *prestige* which belong to foreign lands ; but where shall we find the quiet, happy, tranquil feelings which her green hills and exquisite gardens, her shady lanes, and meadows golden with the cowslip or buttercup, her glowing heaths and picturesque cottages, her little woody nooks, and stiles with overhanging trees, her still bright streams, and haze-softened distances can produce ? There is not much perhaps to elevate the heart, but all to tranquillize it ; and tranquillity was all we wanted then—permission to enjoy the happiness that came from within.

The country there then just suited us. It was of that charming style which we call “ rural.” Soft, round hills locking quite into the distance down the long valleys ; low copse-woods, and grass fields full of cowslips at first, and then carpeted with all hues ; clover-fields sending their pure scent abroad through the air ; and—flowing swiftly and silently through the valley—the brightest stream that ever sparkled in the sun ; whose waters were so clear,

that you would have hardly known them to be water, but for their rippling eddies, and the added brightness which they gave to the long green water-weeds that waved and floated beneath their “*mobili cristalli*.” If inclined for far-off ramblings, we wandered about the sunny glades, and swelling hills on the one side; or on the other, mounted the higher ground, and looked eastward through clumps of trees, and over boundless meadows, towards the Downs, and onwards to the heights of Ramsgate; or back over the rich valley to the old Castle of Dover, with the cliffs of France stretching far beyond the line of dark blue sea.

When it was too hot for walking, we used to sit out beneath some beautiful lime trees which shaded the bottom of our sloping garden, and overhung the clear stream which I have spoken of; and there Mary would bring her work, or drawing; and I read, or talked; or we sat in that still, but active enjoyment of existence which is so charming! But, “*la position la plus douce, à toujours son côté de souffrance; probablement pour qu’elle soit sanctifiée;*” and the thing that did in some measure mar the animated peace of the joyful, thankful life which we were then leading, was the state of the poor old General, whose mind appeared evidently to fail, while his irritability increased to a fearful degree.

For a time we attributed his constantly talking of his poverty and fretting lest he should at last be starved, to this weak state of intellect; but at length it really seemed as if he had some foundation for what he said, from great losses sustained by the burning of his house, and from other causes.

I shall never forget with what distress the first idea that Mary had to endure any privation smote upon my heart. We were sitting together under the lime trees, then laden with their fragrant blossoms, and the old man was near us, alternately dozing in his chair, and waking up to make some querulous remark or other. Mary's usual occupation had been drawing, embroidering, or doing some ornamental work, but this day she was doing something for her own use. I need not have been shocked, for the materials on which she was exercising her neat-handed skill, were fine and delicate; but I was unused to see her so employed, and asked her what she was making.

"Some little cuffs," she replied; "are they not pretty?"

"Very; but why should you make them for yourself? your maid is still with you."

"Yes! I could not part from her; we were children together, and we love each other so much. But you know we are not so rich as we used to be,

and she has many other things to do now ; so I find that I must do these little works, and many others for myself ; but the hardship is not very great to set little stitches in muslin and lace."

"Muslin and lace !" cried the old General in a piteous voice ; having between sleeping and waking caught his daughter's last words. "Muslin and lace ! Aye, that is so like women ! If they haven't bread to eat, still they must have their muslins and laces !—Mary, you'll ruin me if you go on in this way."

I looked at her ; and the tears came fairly into my eyes, as with her angel smile she answered her father's irritating remark by saying :

"This lace is not new, my father,"—for she always retained her foreign habit of so addressing him—"you have seen it before. When *Giuletta di Mazini* was married, it trimmed my bridesmaid's dress ; and now I was making it into some of those little cuffs which you say you always like to see me wear."

This answer seemed but half to satisfy the old man, who continued his complaints in a low voice, murmuring about "muslin and lace," as if haunted by their spectral images.

Mary saw that it was best to say no more ; and looked at me with that excusing smile, which a mother might have worn for a loved and wayward child.

The thought of her having any privation was however distracting to me ; and not all her gay cheerfulness, could reconcile me to seeing her gradually give up her favourite pleasures, her music, and painting, and her lighter employments, to occupy herself with common, necessary works ; and as is often the case where folly is joined to affection, instead of cheering her through any difficulties she might have, I often turned her joyous hours into sad ones by irritable lamentations and bemoanings of her fate. For myself, I felt I should not have cared for any labour undertaken for her ; and was never perhaps in better spirits, than when, as she sate under the shade of the limes, plying her busy needle, I worked close by at her little garden, weeding and training the flowers she loved so well ; and then hot and tired, threw myself on the grass by her side. But for her !—I should have liked to have spread everything rich and beautiful that the world contained at her feet ; and I suppose I should have gone on for ever tormenting myself and her, but for what I heard her one day say to my mother, when she thought I was far away. They were sitting together enjoying the soft summer air on the lawn, busily intent on their work, and as my feet fell silently *sur l'herbe veloutée* they did not hear me approaching.

“Poverty like this,” I heard her say, “is rather animating than depressing; supplying the stimulus of necessity to the pleasure of employment. I think I was never happier in my life; and if only my father were contented, and Wilfred would not make me unhappy, by being so himself on my account, I should be only too joyful! What is poverty when I have his love? And can it take from me the blessing of God?—the pleasures of nature?”

“But have you no fears for the future?” asked my mother.

“Oh no,” she replied, “the Word of truth says ‘My God shall supply all your need.’ What therefore He does not supply, may be my *fancy*, but is not my *need* you know.” And she looked up with a smile; and as she did so, caught sight of me, as I stood silently behind my mother’s chair, my heart full of deep emotion.

Her colour rose to crimson.

“Oh, Wilfred!” she exclaimed, in some embarrassment; “I did not know you were so near. However, you have got the listener’s due, and heard no good of yourself.”

“No, I have heard no good of myself,” I replied; “but that which must do me good.—And is it really I, Mary,” I continued, as I took the chair my mother had left, I knew, for my use, “is it

really I who am the source of discomfort to you?—you for whom I would gladly lay down my life—slave in the sun—work in the mines—do anything!”

“My dearest Wilfred, thank you from my very heart,” she replied, “but I don’t want you to do all those great things for me; I only want you to do—what is perhaps after all a greater,—to give up all anxiety for me, and let me be happy by seeing that you are so. I do assure you that if I saw you cheerful, I should be happier almost than I could bear.”

“I know you would not deceive me, except to console me,” I replied; “and though I have thought that you did that sometimes, yet what I have heard you say this moment to my mother, has set my heart quite at rest. And can it be, Mary, that my love makes up to you for poverty?” And I covered my face with my hands as millions of feelings flooded my breast.

She was silent; she knew she need not speak.

“Well then!” I continued after a moment, “I will be as happy as you. Yes! you are right in being so; for I am sure that no riches can be to us what the love of God, and of each other is; and no one can take that from us. You must try again, and teach me to ‘live for the day,’ as you have done so often before;—and who has such days as I have? But tell me, Mary, why should you be so particu-

larly happy just now ; when most others would be unhappy ?”

“ I can only feel it,” she replied ; “ as a proof of God’s love, who ‘ stays His rough wind in the day of the East wind,’ and will not let it blow too chillingly upon me. He did not send me poverty, till He had given me so much to make up for it ; for besides having you with me, have I not found a mother ?”

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From that time I strove really to do as I had said, and to “ live for the day ;”

“ To watch time’s moments, *felt* as they rushed by,” and to enjoy the thousand blessings poured upon my happy path. It was long indeed before the seeds of all the bright things she had sown in my heart, sprung up ; but from the time I am speaking of, I certainly began to obtain some little power over those depressions and fears, which so dishonour God, and which rob us of the benefit of all the bright things which He gives us so richly to enjoy.

It was strange that notwithstanding the sorrow with which I thought of Mary’s sudden fall from riches to poverty, yet the idea of its interfering with our marriage, never once occurred to me. The young, thank God ! are not generally mercenary, for they know but little of the value of money ;

and some never become so, because though they may have learnt its value, yet their minds are too elevated, and they have found thousands of treasures—treasures of heart—of soul—which far, far outweigh it. Neither Mary nor I had ever been brought up to think of expense, and I am almost inclined to say—I am thankful for it; it left our minds so free from all debasing considerations. Yet I do not think that either of us ever could have been made to value money, otherwise than as a necessary means of living, and a blessed means of doing good. All we had ever wanted, had been supplied—we asked not whence, and cared not how. What therefore might have been a rational cause of fear, we were for a long time spared; and time therefore sped happily by. But a black cloud was hovering over us, that was soon to break in storms of trouble on our heads.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

When thus my —— did daily dawn, how she lit up my world!—tinging more rosily the roseate clouds, that,—like those in her summer-cheek—played to and fro, like clouds in Italian skies.—MARDI.

Those loving, glorious eyes!

The sun of another world doth in their brightness rise.

If thy heart

Be grown thus restless, is it not because

Within its dark folds thou had mantled up

Some burning thought of ill?

NOTHING had been heard of Captain Norman-ton for some time; though he had at first written to General Sydney, and spoken of visiting him as soon as his affairs would permit. But spring had ripened into summer, and the summer hues were beginning to be enriched with the warmer tints of autumn, yet still he came not; and several months

having elapsed without his having even written again, we began to hope that he had in the cooler moments of absence, felt it wisest and most honourable to pursue his object no further. Such however, it soon appeared was not the case.

On one of those sultry days that we sometimes have at the beginning of September, I had been very busy in training up a jessamine, which was a great favourite with us ;—with Mary for the sake of its starry, fragrant flowers, and with me because it grew round the window of a little morning room, where she would sit sometimes when she wished to be alone. Often had my voice from below, called her to that window ; and then she would look down upon me like—what she was—my guardian angel ; and speak those ever gentle words of cordial kindness, which came so warm to my heart.

I had mounted a ladder that day to reduce to obedience, some rambling shoots which had intruded too far upon her view ; and it was a delight to me which I cannot describe, to lean on the outside of her window, and talk to her as she sat in her own little room, surrounded by the thousand “piccoli oggetti,” which—the more perhaps, because they contrast so much with our rougher minds, and rougher habits—constitute a part of the charm, which makes women “the poetry of human life.”

There is certainly a great pleasure in anything



that moment ; and she came to the window, and threw the sprigs of jessamine which I gathered for her, down to my mother, who was standing below, with childish amusement ; looking, as she did so, more like a creature of earth than I had ever seen her before ; for there was generally an elevation in her countenance, and a depth of feeling in her full and most expressive eyes, that stilled the more frivolous parts of one's nature, and filled the heart with happiness rather than with mirth. There was no change but what embellished her !

“ Yet was there light around her brow,  
A holiness in those dark eyes,  
That showed, though wandering earthward now,  
Her spirit's home was in the skies.”

We were enjoying ourselves in this way, in the exceeding gladness of our hearts, when the servant appeared at the drawing-room window, which opened upon the lawn, and spoke to my mother. I did not hear what he said, but I guessed it by her answering: “ General Sydney is there,” pointing to where the old man sat at a little distance, basking in the sun.

My heart suddenly ceased beating ; for the servant receiving her answer, and stepping out on the lawn, was followed by one whose figure I could not mistake—Captain Normanton. He bowed to my mother, and as he did so, I saw his eye glance

up to the window where I was standing ; but he evidently did not recognise me, and passed on. Mary saw him as well as I, and in sudden terror she grasped my hand as if for protection, and shrunk back into the room, trembling from head to foot.

“Why should you be afraid of him, dearest Mary?” I whispered ; “he can do nothing to hurt you.”

“I cannot tell,” she replied ; “but the sight of him fills me with dread.”

“Nothing can separate us, dear,” I said ; “God, I am sure, will never let that be ; so don’t be afraid. Yet from my soul I wish he were commanding some fine frigate in the South Seas, or ‘careering in the Celestial waters,’ or anywhere but here. But I must go down, I suppose, and speak to him, or he will think it odd.” And I ran down the ladder.

I advanced to meet him, as he was walking towards the house with the General ; and spite of the many reasons I had to deprecate his presence there, I could not but feel a sort of cordiality at again seeing my old commander. He was walking with his eyes bent on the ground—a habit of his that always gave a particularly unpleasant expression to his countenance—and he did not see me till I stopped before him and spoke. He started as if he had been shot ; and looked at me with

bewilderment and terror, as if I were an 'affrit' crossing his path. All strength seemed for a moment gone from him, and his arms hung down by his side as if he had not power to raise one to shake the hand I held out to him.

"Mr. St. Clair!" at last he exclaimed; coldly giving me his hand, whilst the thunders of Erebus covered his brow; "you here?"

"Yes," I replied, "I have been here for months; ever since we all left Dover. That lady whom you passed on the lawn is my mother."

He bowed stiffly, as if in acknowledgment of this piece of information; then glancing contemptuously at the hammer which I still held in my hand, he said:

"If I mistake not, I saw you on the top of a ladder just now, when I came in. I recognise the dress now, though of course I never dreamed of looking for you in such a position. Your talents seem of a versatile order."

"Oh! everything is pleasant under some circumstances," I replied; "I was training the jessamine round Miss Sydney's window there."

His eye, as I said this, darted up like lightning to the spot; where at that moment the back of Mary's head with its coils of glossy hair, was just visible, as she stood in the middle of the room.

His cheek had been pale as death till that moment; but then the purple flood rushed up.

His lip trembled, and his nostril quivered as the quick breath came and went; and a suffusion of such tenderness swept over his generally harsh brow, and cold stern eye, that my heart was pained to the quick. He put up his handkerchief to conceal his agitation; but I had turned away, and begun to busy myself in some occupation befitting my new character of gardener, that he might not know I had observed him; leaving him and the General to proceed by themselves to the house.

“Are Mrs. St. Clair and her son living with you here?” I heard him ask in a low voice.

“Yes,” replied the General.

“Rather an odd arrangement is it not, my dear Sir?”

“Is it?” said the old man, rather in alarm. “We met Mrs. St. Clair at Dover, and she was very kind, and he you know—”

They stepped off the silent grass, and the sound of their feet on the gravel walk drowned the rest of the sentence. From the few words however, which reached me, I felt convinced that a storm of trouble was brewing; and that our hitherto cloudless horizon would not be suffered to remain so much longer.

My heart sunk within me; the cold determination of Captain Normanton’s manner, and the evident power he possessed over the weakened mind of the old General, sending the same nameless

terror into my soul that had so overcome Mary. I stood spell-bound almost, watching them till they entered the house.

The drawing-room bell rung,—I felt confident, for the servant to tell Mary to come down. I threw away my hammer and hastened into the house by another door, for I was resolved that she should not have to go alone into that room ; or be obliged to endure without support Captain Normanton's displeasing manners ; wishing too that he should see by the allowed intimacy of our habits, that we must be engaged ; for I could not but feel convinced that if thoroughly assured of that, he had yet honourable feeling enough to make him withdraw from the hopeless contest.

I rushed up-stairs, and hearing my mother's voice in Mary's sitting-room, asked if I might come in. Permission being granted, I went in ; when I found my mother with a heightened colour, and nervous agitation of manner, talking to Mary.

“ Do, my dear Wilfred,” she said, “ try and give some courage to this poor coward heart. I cannot think why she should be so alarmed at the sight of Captain Normanton. He will soon be gone ; and his visit, poor man, will do him more harm than any one else.”

“ It is very foolish,” said Mary, who was looking as pale as death, “ but I cannot help it. Dear Wilfred ! you remember on your first visit to us,

how frightened you said I looked, when I thought it was he who was coming ; and it is much worse now. No one can know how really fearful his presence is to me ; and how insupportable his way of speaking."

"Dearest Mary," I said, kneeling by her, trying to soothe her ; "don't give way to this fear. I will go down with you, and be near you, and then he cannot be disagreeable ; and he must soon be gone."

She rose from her chair. "I will try and get the better of this foolish fear," she said, "but when with him I cannot help feeling, as a miserable bird in the presence of a rattlesnake."

"In this free land," I said smiling, "you need fear no constraint, Mary. And who is there would use it ? not your father !"

"Oh no !" she replied. "And yet Captain Normanton seems to have so much power over him ! and he never seems the same in his presence as when away from him ;—he whom I thought too spirited to be quelled by any one."

The remembrance of the General's manner just before, when passing me in the garden, rushed back to my thoughts, and really for a moment it quite sickened me ; and Bruce's warning also recurred strongly to my mind. However I would not say anything that could increase Mary's fears, so answered with a crazy attempt at gaiety :

"Do you imagine that that well-made boot hides

so very cloven a foot? or that that perfect coat smoothes down the wings of Apollyon? No! I don't think he is quite so redoubtable a foe as that. So now, my dearest, you shall come down; for I fear your father will be vexed at any want of courtesy to him."

When we opened the drawing-room door we found the General with his hand on the lock, just coming to call her.

"Ah! you're here at last," he said with considerable irritation, "I thought you were never coming. Where have you been?"

"We were up-stairs," I answered for her.

Captain Normanton bit his lip—I should have thought, to the blood; but quickly commanding his countenance, he advanced to meet Mary; while, as he observed her timid air, and watched her varying colour, there was a smile on his curled lip, and a sarcastic, defying expression on his countenance, which was scarcely to be endured.

I went up to him; and with as much courtesy as I could command, began talking of our old shipmates, and of other matters. But he was evidently anything but pleased at the interruption; and soon rising, proposed going out into the garden. So we went out, and sat under the shade of the lime trees.

He was in deep mourning: his father, he had told the General had died some months before;

and the attendance on his sick-bed—for he had been an excellent son—and the vast quantities of business he had had on coming into his property, was what had occasioned his long delay in paying his promised visit to Dover. We all sat together in uncomfortable constraint, till at length luncheon was announced—prodigious blessing at that moment! and we returned to the house.

As we passed near Mary's window, against which my ladder was still resting, I said to her :

“I must finish that for you to-morrow, Mary.”

Captain Normanton started at hearing me address her in that familiar way, and turned round fiercely towards me; softening his angry look however to a bitter smile, as he said in an ironical tone :

“England is still, I perceive, as it always was : a land of liberty !”

“All lands should be such,” I replied ; “where we merely claim our rightful privileges.”

Our eyes met and flashed defiance. I saw that he understood me ; and the rage that glared from beneath his suddenly contracted brow was frightful.

We reached the house, where we found my mother waiting for us. Captain Normanton was introduced to her ; and her kindly heart feeling for his painful position, with which we had acquainted her, she was particularly attentive, and

amicable towards him. Nothing however, could rouse him into conversation; he seemed to have the weight of worlds at his heart, and the whole thing appeared insupportable to him. At length he rose to go; saying that he hoped some early day to be able to return, and pay them another visit.

Our eyes again met, but it was my brow that lowered now; his countenance had resumed its smiling contempt. He took his leave, mounted his horse, and rode away. The door closed upon him, and we all took a long breath of deep relief.

The General seemed afraid that we might have observed that he did so, and that it might have appeared ungrateful in him, so he begun:

"He is a very gentlemanlike person, that Captain Normanton; and has been very kind to us. I am afraid his visit was but a dull one. Mary, you didn't talk at all. And why did you stay away so long? it was very uncivil of you."

She seemed at a loss what to say; so made up for her want of words, by stooping down, and kissing him.

"Ah, that's all very well, but when I send for you another time, you must come directly; and I insist on your being more attentive to Captain Normanton. You were never very civil to him, even when on board his ship, and when he was doing all in his power to please you; but I

desire that you will try to be more agreeable to him, at least in your father's house. It is very kind I am sure of any one to take notice of us at all now, when we are so poor, and do not know how we shall get on at all."

And so he rambled on, poor old man, talking of starvation, and Captain Normanton, and extravagance and economy, till my mother as a relief, proposed our taking a walk—and we did so.

It was a heavy burden to her to have continually to keep up his spirits, and bear with his wearisome wanderings over the same subjects for ever; but her love for me, and for Mary too, made her cheerfully endure it; and in time, as she told me, she really used not to hear him as he murmured on; and would answer "Yes," or "No," at random; which she said did always perfectly well.

One would have had more compassion for the weakness of his mind, had his violence of temper weakened with it; but his irritability increased, as his intellect decayed; and this day, Mary's spirits for the first time seemed to sink under it; and as we were sitting together after our walk, her tears streamed down uncontrollably. It was not solely on her father's account however; her mind was oppressed by the remembrance of Captain Normanton's visit. His apparently unchanged feelings towards herself, and his looks of dire

enmity whenever I crossed his path, filled her with an alarm, which for a time quite overbore all her bright hope, and faith ; and with sad forebodings did she look forward to a long term of trouble and trial, ere the time should come when she might, as she said, in her union with me find “ peace, and tranquillity, and joy.”

## CHAPTER XIX.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,  
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,  
Laughing the clouds away, as if in scorn.

God has graciously given me this endowment of love.

THE STONE-CUTTER OF ST. POINT.

Oft by a flower or leaf, in some loved book  
We mark the lines that charm us most : retrace  
Thy life ;—recall its loveliest passage ;—look,  
Dead violets keep the place !

SIR E. BULWER LYTTON.

“Sorrow endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” How often is this true ! The wearied, overwrought mind sees things as night approaches, with its dark shadow on them ; but the morning light, bringing with it, its countless mercies, re-animates the spirits, and makes them rise the higher in their joy, for having cast off

the care which had weighed so heavily on them before.

Never did Mary seem happier or more joyous than the next morning ; when, at my call beneath her window, she looked out, bright as the morn itself. When she came down, and we had time to converse together, she told me how grieved she had been at the sinful, faithless state of her soul the night before ; and how the sense of her weakness had driven her to God for fresh strength and comfort ; and how she had found it, and trusted never again to let it be wrested from her. She said she still thought it likely that she might have trouble, and annoyance from Captain Normanton ; but that she was sure that God would smoothe her way, and strengthen her failing heart.

How happy we were that day ! and my garden-hammer sent forth as ringing and cheerful a sound, when it gave its last stroke, as when it struck its first in defence of discipline and authority. The rebellious jessamine was now reduced to perfect order and subjection, and “ through cloudiest green, radiated its star-like flowers,” round Mary’s window in fresh beauty and brightness. She praised my skill in my new office ; and said that if only the branches of a passion-flower which grew on another part of the house could twine their blossoms with that of the jessamine, her window would be perfect.

It was impossible to effect that of course ; but by the very break of day the next morning, I was walking across the dewy meadows, and through the dusty lanes, to a nursery-garden near Dover, where some little time before I had seen some of the plants she coveted, in full blossom. I chose one, and carried it off in triumph ; as well as a nosegay of flowers for my mother.

The plant was heavy, and the sun was hot ; but I was never less tired with a walk in my life ; the morning air was so exhilarating ; and my heart bounding with happiness ! I was glad to find all still quiet in the house when I returned ; and without losing a moment I mounted the ladder, which I had purposely left against the wall the night before, with my plant in hand ; and having contrived to screen the pot among the thick foliage of the creepers which grew there, I trained the branches of the plant so as to form a fringe all round the lower part of the window. I had chosen one which had several flowers in full bloom on it ; but as they always close at night, and wait for the heat of the sun, before they expand themselves, they were still shut up in their green cases, when I had finished my work ; and I cannot say with what childish impatience I looked at them, after I had descended from my ladder, anxious that they should be in their full beauty when Mary came to take her morning view of the world from her

favourite spot. I watched them,—and watched them, as if it had been the light of my eyes that they needed to make them open ; till remembering my mother's nosegay, I ran into the house to arrange it. I put it into a vase of water and placed it on the breakfast-table ; and then rushed back to see if my flowers had done anything wonderful in my absence.—They had indeed ! The sun had just overtopped some trees which shaded the house, and had poured its hot beams on the blossoms which were so ready to receive them ; and there they stood, like glorious suns themselves, yet with unenvious beams, allowing the soft stars of the jessamine to shine beside them.

I called to Mary—it was just eight o'clock—her usual hour, for we were both early risers,—and stood below waiting for her ; for I feared to lose her first look of glad surprise when she should see her new-blown favourites beneath her window. At last she came, and was gaily returning my morning salutation, when her eye caught sight of them.

“ Oh, Wilfred ! ” she exclaimed.

She looked at me ; and reading somewhat of their history in my eyes, she bent over them, and a suffusion of extreme emotion rushed over her countenance.

I flew up the ladder, and was by her side in an instant. She seemed more touched than I could have thought at so slight a mark of love ; and bent

her softened, drooping eyes on the purple glory of the flowers.

“Do you like them, Mary?” I asked.

“Like them! Oh, Wilfred! I never liked anything half so much.” And she raised her loving eyes to mine with an expression that choked me. I could not speak a word.

“Oh!” she continued; “you might have done many a great thing that would not have melted my heart as this remembrance of a little passing wish has done. I can never forget it! All blessed happinesses will now be associated in my mind with this flower: — Christ’s love — God’s love — and your’s — and, best of all—the power to feel and to return them.”

“Is loving then, a greater happiness to you than being loved?” I asked; my voice still trembling with emotion.

“Ah surely!” she replied. “When we love, every pleasure to those we love is a pleasure to us; —all we can do for them is joy. I could work unseen, unknown, by night and day, and be fully repaid by their enjoyment. It is so blessed to love!”

“I believe you could, Mary,” I replied; for your nature is near akin to God’s, who does ‘all for love, and nothing for reward.’ But I doubt whether my feelings are so amiable; I could not love long I think without return.”

"You have never been tried," she answered gently; "but even had you been, I do not think you would ever have failed in kindness."

She began arranging some of the leaves of the plant, and turned one of the blossoms towards her, so as fully to see its beauty.

"I don't know how to thank you enough," she began again; "these *petites surprises*—these little thoughtfulnesses show so much affection—and create so much. But where did you get it? and how have you managed it so well?"

"I got it at Johnson's garden this morning; and this is how I have managed it." And putting some of the leaves aside, I showed her how I had arranged it.

"And did you bring that great plant all the way yourself? How tired you must be."

"No, not at all," I replied. "Carrying it for you, Mary, made me feel like 'Paul' when carrying 'Virginie,' 'comme si j'avais les ailes d'un oiseau.' I brought a nosegay too for my mother."

"I am so glad of that," she exclaimed; "I must go down, and see how pleased she will be."

"I will join you soon," I said. And I raced down my ladder, and went to change my dusty clothes.

When I went into the breakfast-room I found no one there but Mary. She had re-arranged the flowers with much better taste in the vase,

and put them opposite my mother's place; and had gone into the garden and gathered some others to make a wreath round her plate. She had just completed her fragrant labours when I entered; and she called me joyously to come and admire her handiwork. How could I do otherwise?

“All she did seemed still well done to me!”

and she had in perfection the feminine, and exquisite art of adorning everything she did, by the feeling and taste with which she did it.

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Oh! I could dwell upon that time for ever! It may seem puerile in a man who has reached, “*il mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*,” to remember such things at all; but I fancy the best wisdom our age can teach us, as far as the things of this world go, is to return as nearly as we can to the simple joys and feelings of our youth. Our blessed Lord has said: “Except ye become as little children, ye cannot see the kingdom of God;” and with equal truth I think it may be said, that the nearer we approach in manhood to the pure tastes, and simple pleasures of our first fresh years, the more fully we become inheritors of the earth also.

I have been in stirring scenes enough; in tempests and warfare,—and that of the bloodiest

kind—hand to hand with pirates of the East ; or, a thousand times worse, the devilish slave-dealers of the West ; but I cannot say, that from the moment I washed the foul stain of their ruffian blood off my hands, to the present hour, I have ever had one moment's satisfaction in retracing those scenes of horror ; or have ever voluntarily turned back to that frightful page of memory. Grief too, unspeakable ! and the throes of fearful passions, and wild, thrilling joys—all those I have known—oh ! too well known !—But not even to the last—to the overpowering joy—does my mind turn with half the pleasure that it does to those happy times when my spirit was so calm, that the slightest breath woke it into brightness, and made it reflect the light of heaven in a thousand ways. “ I could not fathom the depths of my own happiness—I could but float upon its sunny stream.”

It is the little things of life and love that “ bring all paradise into our heart ;” which, stretching out their tendrils on every side, cling round our memory, till they become a part of our very selves. Yes ! true is his “ Philosophy,” who says :

“ Thou art wise, and shalt find comfort if thou study thy  
pleasure in trifles ;

For slender joys often repeated fall as sunshine upon the  
heart ;

The streams of small pleasures, fill the lake of happiness.”

The recollections of that day have never faded from my heart, nor have they ever been recalled without bringing with them somewhat of their first happiness — “embalmed, not buried” in my memory. They were so true to Nature! so simple, yet so full of life and happiness! Greater things are often swept away by Time’s rushing waters; but these golden sands of life sink too deep into the stream, for its waves to reach, or to disturb them!

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I could but praise Mary for the beauty of her arrangement, and just as she had stolen one of Summer’s last roses from the nosegay, to place by the side of her father’s plate, he entered. My mother followed, and charmed by the flowers, and the love of her children, her kind eye beamed dearer love upon us than ever.

When breakfast was over, the General was led forth by Mary to see the wonderful plant that had emulated “Jack’s bean-stalk” with such success in its night’s progress; and, in particular good humour, the old man sang my praises as if he thought I had invented the flower, as well as put it there.

I then told Mary I had a little favour to ask of her, which was to let me go into her sitting-room, and look at all the *roba* with which it was adorned. She readily granted my request;

and we all adjourned there; where my mother and the General having seen everything already, sat down and talked together, while Mary did the honours of her alabasters, marbles, bronzes, &c., to me. Many of them were very beautiful, and I expressed my regret that while abroad I had not got something with which to have enriched her collection.

“I have enough,” she said, “abundance;—and I should almost say, too much, were they not all tokens of affection from others; but there is so much misery in the world that I should not like to give, or to accept anything extravagant in any way.”

“But if no one bought works of art,” I observed, “artists would perish. The whole world cannot be employed in tilling the earth, or in the manufacture of the coarse garments which might just suffice to clothe, and keep us warm.”

“Oh, no!” she answered. “I have no doubt that various tastes are given that there may be a demand for various things;—and talents bestowed, that they may be means of maintenance to those who possess them. I think, too, that as it pleases the Almighty that there should be difference of ranks in the world, that that difference should be seen in all things. Still we are told to ‘let our moderation be known;’ and though refinement is allowable, yet excess of luxury is a selfish and cruel

thing, when many have not the common necessities of life."

"Yet, as a remembrance of my great affection, I should have liked you to have had something from me," I said; "but I have not the slightest thing that I could give you, and now, I ought not perhaps, to spend *our* money in that way."

"You have one thing," she replied, with a heightened colour and kindling smile, as she pointed to a ring with a turquoise which I always wore on my little finger.

"*Would* you wear it?" I exclaimed, delighted.

"Yes; and never take it off, till you asked me to do so."

In an instant the ring was transferred from my finger to hers; and I kissed with grateful love the hand she held out for it.

I can never forget the expression of her countenance as she looked at me, and said:

"You quoted 'Paul's' words to me a little while ago, and I will now quote 'Virginie's' to you: 'Je n'oublierai jamais que tu m'as donné la seule chose que tu possèdes au monde.'"

"Quand on aime," I replied in the same charming language, "on ne peut rien perdre—ce qu'on donne, on retient."

"One must love very much though to part with everything," she continued.

"One must love much more to accept every-

thing," I replied. "When you were rich, I was willing to accept all from you, Mary. Did not I then love much?"

Her lip quivered. She turned aside a moment ; then opening a little case that stood near, she took out a ring, with a single large opal in it, and placing it in my hand, asked me to wear it for her sake. It was beautiful, and I did not like to take it from her : I told her so, but she stopped me, saying :

"Remember your own words, Wilfred : 'Ce qu'on donne, on retient.' "

## CHAPTER XX.

If the happy knew how much power belonged to a single word of kindness,—a glance of feeling given to the despised, they would not look so coldly on the miserable.—THE BRAVO.

Sanctified civility is a great ornament to Christianity.—  
LIFE OF PHILIP HENRY.

Be well, when you are not ill ; and pleased, when you are not angry.—TEMPLE.

THUS passed our days in peace and happiness. We read much, and spent our time in, I trust, useful as well as pleasant ways. Few days passed without our visiting some of the abodes of poverty and ignorance which lay scattered around us ; and I was particularly struck with the effect of Mary's manner on the often suffering creatures we met with. One of the peculiar charms of her character was her constant cheerfulness. Wherever she

went, her gladsome presence made sunshine all around. "Her coming was a gladness." Never was happiness chilled by a look of hers, never did despondency meet the light of her eye without feeling half its burthen gone.

It was but little indeed of this world's goods that she had to bestow upon the poor. "Silver and gold have I none," she might almost have said; and, oh! with what truth added: "but that which I have give I unto you!" It might indeed be said, "When the eye saw her then it blessed her;" and it was delightful to me to see with what pleasure her visits were received. She had not that dictatorial way which I have sometimes observed in many, even very good people; nor did she tell the poor that theirs "were light afflictions," and that they should "be thankful for what they had." She felt, even from the contrast with her own ease and happiness, how heavy their sorrows must often be; and how difficult it was, even to the Christian—how impossible to the natural heart, to give thanks at all times. She would sit with kind sympathy to listen to their tale of troubles; and acknowledge—because she felt—how hard they must be to bear; then speak some bright and sunny word of better times, and better worlds. She seldom went empty-handed; even though the gift might be no more than a ribbon for a doll's sash, or bit of string for a boy's kite—anything, in short, to show they

were thought of, and their little pleasures remembered; and more small creature's sorrows were effectually cured in one day, by the exhaustless *bonbons* which her little *sac* was ever ready to give forth, than the crossest of village school-dames could have produced among her naturally rebellious victims in a week.

Courteous she was too, to every creature. She never passed a poor person, even though a stranger, in the lanes or fields, without a cheerful word, or kindly salutation. Many a time has she laughed at herself for what she called "telling them what they knew without her:" in the heat, that "it was very hot," in the dust that "it was very dusty," in the rain that "it was very rainy." While, in the absence of all excitement as to the state of the weather, the ready "good morning," or "good evening," was there in kindly greeting to all as they passed.

"Why do you notice them when they do not notice you?" I asked her one day.

"Why should I not?" she asked in answer. "It must come from one of us first, and why not from me? They always answer pleasantly."

And they always did; and many a time have I seen a heavy-browed, care-worn woman, or sulky, dogged-looking man look at her beautiful countenance unmoved, until she spoke to them; and then the cloud would lighten for a moment, and

the features soften to a smile. The beauty was hers alone ; but the kindly greeting was for them, and therefore it touched them.

“ You know,” she added one day, “ I am so used to it, in my own dear country, where no one in the fields or hills, or on the shore or anywhere, excepting perhaps in the streets, would think of passing another without some kindly greeting ; and if the poor do not come out with their bunch of grapes, or strawberries, or bright sweet flowers, they give you at least the gay ‘ *buon giorno*,’ or the warm ‘ *salute*,’ and so it should be ! Are we not brethren ? creatures of one common creation ? Can we suppose that the angels, as the ‘ *silken rushing*’ of their wings bears them past each other in God’s kingdom, or when abroad on His messages of mercy—can we suppose that they meet and pass as strangers,—as if they had no common interest, no common love, no common God ? Oh no ! and those things foster a kindly feeling, and that is like sunshine to the heart.”

She was right ; and if people could but know the value of a cheerful look, and gentle word, how different would their homes generally be, and the world at large ! When the door opens, and a joyous face appears—one’s heart warms beneath its genial influence ; but when a gloomy, or melancholy being walks in, one’s own mind feels saddened, and disturbed ; and a chill falls even upon

all one's own joys. It is a great sin neglecting these things ! and though people may not be aware of it, yet those who indulge—if indulgence it can be called—in habitual gloom and lowness of spirits, when they have no real affliction, indulge also invariably in habitual impatience and selfishness. Lowness of spirits—unless as I have said, under great, immediate affliction—would in the *Palais de la vérité* be forced to call itself : irritable weakness ; and dignified gloom : selfish disregard of the feelings of others ; while cheerfulness might call herself, an animated wish to promote the happiness of all around ; and gentleness—God's messenger of peace on earth !

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I had run up to town frequently to see friends and relations, and on matters of business, and had sometimes paid more distant visits ; though it was, as may be supposed, more from duty than inclination, that I ever absented myself from home. I had seen Bruce several times : and was happy to find, his pious feelings wholly unchanged, though grieved to see that his sentiments for Mary were so too. But he ever seemed delighted to see me, and warmly sympathised in all I told him of my affairs. He was much concerned to hear of the change in Mary's fortune ; and much irritated at the account of Captain Normanton's visit.

“I told you how it would be,” he exclaimed ;

“ he'll torment her as long as he is alive ; and if he dies first, he will do as the Frenchman obligingly promised his love to do : “ *Il dansera à ces nêces en cadavre.*”

“ Provided he does not perform Alonzo the Brave's terrific waltze with her, and ‘ bear her away to the tomb,’ I shall not much care for that,” I replied ; “ though I really am very sorry for him.”

“ Sorry for him ! I've no patience with you, St. Clair. Why should you be sorry for a ‘ fellow,’ (and he looked at me with a smile, as the old expression escaped his lips) who cares for nothing in creation but himself ? How much does he think of you ? Is he not at this moment doing all he can to make you, and Miss Sydney miserable ? I can't bear to hear you talk in that way ! Sorry for him !” And he took off his hat to cool his rage ; —we were walking together in St. James's Park.

“ Nevertheless it is quite true,” I said ; “ I *am* sorry for him. I have not the unmitigated abhorrence of him that you have ; I could name many good things in him ; and I cannot help thinking somehow that he is really improved by having been so much with Mary—not half the martinet he was when first we joined. Depend upon it, Bruce,

“ ‘ All have some virtue if we leave it them  
In peace and quiet.’ ”

“ Well, his virtue methinks ought to be, just now: in leaving you ‘ in peace and quiet.’ ”

“ About this affair I confess, I think he does behave ill,” I said, “ but then I, of all creatures can best feel what it must be to—”

“ Go on,” said Bruce in a subdued voice, and drawing his hat again over his brow ; “ never mind me. But my feeling is totally different from his. Besides I feel that I owe so much to you both—to her for her prayers, to you for your words—for it is they which have raised me from ‘ raking in the dust,’ like Bunyan’s old man, to see ‘ the crown invisible immortal,’ that hangs over my head,—that I can never be grateful enough. You have given me high and holy motives for action, a blessing inappreciable ! and I can never cease to bless the hour when you and she first trod the same deck with me.”

“ Your saying so always makes me happy,” I replied ; “ it is such eternal joy to think of having been the means of raising one soul to everlasting life, and happiness. ‘ Ever-lasting happiness !’ Think of those words, Bruce, as put together.

“ ‘ Who shall grasp that thrilling thought ? life and joy for ever !’ ”

“ Thrilling indeed ! ” he said ; a slight shiver passing over him as if the thought had gone

through his very soul ; “ all else fades before that ! I wish I could always keep it before me ; but somehow at times the foreground closes in so thick that the distance gets shut out. But as to that man, I say again, I have no patience with him.”

“ I can't say that I have much,” I replied. “ Yet I really have no doubt that he thinks it would be happier for her to marry him, as he is so much richer than I am.”

“ Well, have it your own way,” he exclaimed ; growling in a provoked tone :

“ ‘ To make the croun a pund, my Jamie went to sea,  
And Auld Robin Gray came a courting to me.’ ”

“ Very likely,” I said, “ but I don't fear the detested result :

‘ So they gied him my hand, tho' my heart was far at sea,  
And Auld Robin Gray was gudeman to me :’

she would perish first ! and I would wish her to do so. Better a million times the glorious freedom of death to such as her ! There's nothing in existence more utterly despicable in a man than the selfishness which makes him tear a woman's heart to pieces by the very force of those feelings he should most respect and love in her. Why couldn't that hideous old man—if he ever had the misfortune of an existence otherwise than in song—have maintained his old friend, without making his

young one miserable for it? I've no patience with such things! Why shouldn't a man if he wished to help his love, send her assistance—I would—without her knowing from whom it came? That would be glorious!"

"Yes, it would," said Bruce. "However that's what he'll never 'dream of in his philosophy.' Everything with him will go to fill up the gaping, gasping, grasping hole of selfishness."

"Well! after all, when I think of my having asked Mary to marry me with my small fortune, and 'modest prospects,' I think I was pretty selfish too."

"Not in the least! If you hadn't asked her she would have asked you—if she had dared; and therefore it was only kind of you to save her the trouble! And after all you only gave her the option—and no one can complain of that; she had only to send you adrift, and there was an end of you. But this 'fellow,' though he sees she has nailed her colours to the mast, yet fires a broadside every time he passes her; and will, if you don't take care, send out his boats some fine day—or rather dark night—cut her out from under your very batteries, and tow her away to his own port with drums beating, and flags flying! If he doesn't, it will not be his fault. So lay that beautiful nautical figure of mine to heart, St. Clair, and keep a sharp look-out a-head."

"You are wonderfully nautical just now certainly," I answered; "spite of your always saying you hate that phraseology."

"Well, so I do; but it fell upon me all of a sudden, I suppose, out of the shadow of this great house, 'big with the fate of' St. Clair and of Bruce;" looking up at the Admiralty which we were then approaching.

"Not with mine just now," I said; "I'm not going to trouble them for some time to come. I did hope never to do so again; but I fear I must in time, under our change of circumstances; though for myself I don't care how little I have to live upon; so that one has enough just for comfort."

"And at what degree does the thermometer of your 'comfort,' stand?"

"Oh! I should never want more than we have at present," I replied; "though to be sure the General's pension makes up most of his part now, he says; and that must go with him. But then I have a little."

"My dear fellow," said Bruce, "don't you be fancying you can live upon *l'air embaumé de fleurs* a bit more than other people. Remember that what is enough for one, is poverty for two, and starvation for a dozen. I forgive you all your attractions if you make Miss Sydney happy; but if you marry her to her unhappiness, I never will

forgive you. So now," he added, as we stopped at the Admiralty gate, "just come in here with me and show yourself; for this is my goal just now. Here I daily, and hourly besiege them—pouring my 'hard case' into their ears; and never do I mean them to rest—sleep, eat, or drink in comfort, till they've given me my promotion. So come along,—you'd much better."

"No, not now; I would not for worlds leave England till my engagement to Miss Sydney was fully acknowledged; for though our whole way of going on, and our families living together as they do, must make it a settled thing in the world's eye, still with the power Captain Normanton has over the old General, I should never feel sure that she were beyond the power of persecution unless his word of honour were passed."

"Nor then," exclaimed Bruce; "if, as you say that man has such influence over him."

"Oh! yes," I answered; "spite of all his faults, if General Sydney's word is once passed, he will keep to it for ever; for he is the very soul of honour."

"*Was*,—say," replied Bruce; "for his soul, or sense is well-nigh gone; and his honour may perhaps have kept it company for old acquaintance sake. But when do you expect your engagement to be finally settled?"

"Not for this year or more. My next birthday

—the 10th of October—about three weeks hence, I shall be twenty ; and by the best calculations the year after I shall be twenty-one—‘ of age ’—as it is called ; at which time he said he would give his consent, if we remained in the same mind, and if he saw no reason to refuse it.”

“Humph ! an ugly proviso that !” cried Bruce shaking his head. “Yes, you are right in staying. Keep your ground by all means, if you can ; your promotion is of less consequence than that by far.—Well then, here we part ;—unless you can wait a little, till I come out again.”

“No, I cannot do that,” I replied ; “I have to dine at —’s to-night, and to-morrow I return home.”

“God bless you then, old fellow !” he exclaimed ; shaking my hand warmly ; “and may He keep you happy—both of you.”

“I’ll walk up to the door with you,” I said. And we went into the court together.

At that moment—who should come out of the door, but Captain Normanton ! Bruce grasped my arm ;—I heard him clench his teeth. The Captain came towards us with his downward look, and did not raise his eyes till we were close to him.

We made a little way for him ; and we should both have been heartily glad had he passed on without recognising us. But being a remarkably

well-bred man, he looked up with a little bow of acknowledgment when he observed us moving out of his way, and then he observed who we were. He stopped,—and so did we of course. He held out a hand to Bruce, and then to me; but his manner was exceedingly embarrassed.

He spoke of his pleasure in seeing us. “Seeing us together reminded him of old times,” he said. Then excusing himself, he added that he was in a hurry—and so departed. We walked on a few steps in silence. At the door we stopped, and again shook hands.

“If you haven’t applied for employment for yourself,” said Bruce bitterly, as we parted; “take my word for it, it has been applied for, for you.”

## CHAPTER XXI.

How calm, how beautiful comes on  
The stilly hour, when storms are gone !  
When warring winds have died away,  
And clouds beneath the glancing ray  
Melt off, and leave the land and sea,  
Sleeping in bright tranquillity.

LALLA ROOKH.

Ye commune of hopes and aspirations, the fervent  
breathings of the heart ;  
Ye speak with pleasant interchange the treasured  
secrets of affection ;  
Ye listen to the voice of complaint, and whisper the  
language of comfort ;  
And as in a double solitude, ye think in each other's  
hearing.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

A thousand sad ideas rise,—  
Daily and hourly rise,—a thousand acts  
Of tenderness too slightly felt before,  
Rush o'er my soul with anguish ever new.  
How shall I learn to live without her ?

LINES TO THEODOSIA.

BRUCE'S words hung heavy on my heart during

all my journey home the next day ; and spoilt the pleasure which I should otherwise have derived from the thought of reaching again that centre of my earthly affections ;—spoilt too the enjoyment which the drive that beautiful morning, would otherwise have given me.

Curious and sad it is, that while the words of Him who spake as never man spake, so soon fade from one's mind, the words of a fallible mortal like oneself have power to toss the soul about in such restless unhappiness. "Oh ! for an overcoming faith !" Truly is it with us as with Peter ! when we look to the Lord we can walk on the top of the stormiest waters ; but when we take our eyes off Him, we feel the winds and waves around us, and beginning to be afraid, we sink in faithless despair. But He is God, "patient because eternal," and of never-failing mercy ; therefore His gracious hand is ever ready for the sinking soul, and His voice of mercy ever whispering in its inmost recesses : "Oh thou of little faith ! wherefore didst thou doubt ?"

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That morning was indeed most beautiful ! There had been a violent storm in the night, and when I mounted the box of the coach at an early hour, the thunder was still muttering in the west, and the rain descending in torrents from black clouds in the far horizon ; while a

light and silvery spray was still falling around us; shining as it fell like diamonds in the morning sun, which had just disentangled itself from the net-work of frail vaporous rack which the storm had left behind. The meadows, and commons, and grass fields were covered with the threads of the gossamer;—or as foreigners call them: “*Les fils de Marie*;” which, catching the small drops as they fell, made the whole earth white as with a silken veil. The song of the spring birds was of course hushed; but the “inarticulate voice of the loyal universe,” was still raised aloft. The thrush and the blackbird sent out their clear, ringing notes from the gardens and shrubberies as we passed; and the more distant woodlark, whose song scarce yields in charm even to that of the nightingale, sung loud among the trees; while as we dashed along the wet, and fresh-smelling road, between the glittering hedges washed bright by the rain from every grain of dust,—the sky-lark sent down from overhead, showers of song; or, startled by our approach from her grassy nest, rose with her fluttering music straight up into the air;

“Type of the wise, who soar but never roam;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and home.”

Yet the pleasure of all these things was lost

to me, because I would dwell on the possible unhappiness of a possible future !

But oh ! the thought of parting ! the thought of Mary—her loveliness—her tenderness ! that I must leave it all, and go alone to distant climes ! Oh ! it seemed as if I had never loved—never felt her love, before !

In this wretched mood I reached home. I tried to shake off the oppression on my spirits lest Mary should perceive it ; for I did not wish her to be disturbed by the perhaps unfounded fears that troubled me. But I had but little self-command ; or rather perhaps, I was so much in the habit of saying everything to her, that to keep back any feeling from her was an almost impossible effort.

The storm which we had had in London had passed off in another direction, and had left our neighbourhood quite unvisited. I was glad of this, as it enabled us to sit out as usual in the garden, which we much preferred to the house ; where our readings and conversations were liable to continual interruptions ; but now as I sat under the accustomed trees, my endeavours to be cheerful sorely failed ; and I saw Mary's eye often fixed on me, as if anxiously watching my countenance. It was the first approach to anything like a separation of

thought which had ever occurred between us, and was too painful to be borne; and she might too, think that the cause of my trouble was more deep and real than in truth it was, so at last I determined to tell her; and the next time that I caught her anxious look, I answered it with a smile, and said:

"You think there is something troubling me Mary; and so there is, though it is not much."

I then told her what had occurred in town; and of the effect that Bruce's words had had upon me. She breathed a deep sigh.

"You think me very foolish, don't you?" I asked, "for being troubled about such a 'perhaps'—such a mere imaginary evil."

"No," she replied kindly, "I do not wonder at your being troubled at it. But, dear Wilfred, *must* you go if they do appoint you to a ship?"

"Unless I wish to put myself on the shelf ever after," I replied. "The Lords of the Admiralty are not accustomed to having their appointments refused."

Her countenance fell.

"I had never contemplated your going away," she said with a sigh; "though it was foolish of me not to do so; as now you must of course follow your profession. But it seems as if life could not be without you! However don't let us think of it—it makes one too unhappy. It is

merely a vague fancy of Mr. Bruce's ; and his fears may be wholly unfounded."

"I trust they are," I said ; "but every time the remembrance of Captain Normanton's countenance comes before me, as I saw it in this place, I seem to feel that passions like those cannot but issue in evil to those whom he hates."

"You have generally taken his part, Wilfred, you must not begin to be unjust."

I did not answer ; but sat by her gloomy and dejected.

"Are you so fond of the thought of parting," she added smilingly after a time ; "that you take it for your companion before you need?"

"I cannot help thinking of it—and with fear and pain, whatever you may do," I answered reproachfully.

She seemed hurt, and her colour rose a little.

"I do not wish to think of it," she answered gently ; "just because it would be with such fear and pain. When it does come, God will give me strength to bear it, I know ; but He has never said, 'As thy *morrow*, so shall thy strength be *to-day*,' so it would be more, perhaps, than I could bear now."

"But the thought of parting is a *present* evil to me," I answered ; "now—this very hour."

"Ah ! dearest Wilfred !" she said, laying her gentle hand so pityingly on my shoulder, as I

rested on my elbow on the grass by her side ; “ our gracious God never let's fall on His children a trial which is too hard for them at the moment. Only let us trust to Him, and I feel sure that we shall always find ourselves equal to what He sets before us.”

“ It may be so,” I replied with a sigh ; “ but to me just now it seems as if all happiness were being swept away ; just as this stream bears off what I cast upon it.” And in wantonness I tore up a handful of the grass, and threw it on the shining waters, which bore the scattered fragments in thousand eddies swiftly out of sight.

“ What is it makes the difference between our feelings, Mary ?” I added ; “ for I am sure that your affection is as great as mine. When speaking the other day to Bruce, I refused to look forward to any disaster ; but now the thought of parting so kills my heart that the very sun has ceased to shine, the birds to sing, the flowers to smell for me—What is it makes me so troubled, and you so calm ?”

“ I don't feel calm now, Wilfred,” she replied tremulously ; “ your sadness has saddened me. But I will tell you,” and she looked up with a brightening countenance, “ how I often comfort myself in cases which would otherwise cast my spirit down : I look round and see everything to enjoy, and I then think : ‘ how can what is to be to-morrow, affect this moment ? And then I pray

that I may not spoil the pleasure given by God's hand ; and I try to enjoy what I have."

I felt that she was right, and I saw that she was sad ; and I knew that it was I that was the cause of her sadness. Yet a wayward irritation possessed my mind, and steeled it against kindlier emotions, as I exclaimed bitterly :

" Then if you knew we were to part for ever to-morrow, you would be as happy as usual to-day ?"

" Oh, Wilfred ! to know that we *must* part—" She stopped, and covering her face with her hands, burst into tears.

" There Mary !" I exclaimed, more pleased than touched at her emotion—wretch that I was !—" you can feel as well as I. Where is your philosophy now ?"

" Gone," she said, shaking her head, while the tears still streamed down thick and fast.

I drew one hand down with gentle force from her face, and kissed it with deep repentant tenderness.

She clasped mine for a moment ; then withdrawing it, wiped her eyes and her poor wet cheeks, and turning to me with a smile, though a quivering one, said :

" Yes ! my philosophy was all gone, Wilfred, but you have no cause for triumph ; for I chose to leave the present—the happy, happy present ! and think

of that dreary hour which after all may never come. I was foolish—and therefore sorrowful.”

“Dearest Mary!” I exclaimed; my whole heart gushing out in tenderness towards her; “how hateful I have been. Oh! what a difference it would make to both of us, if you were one whose weak spirit was continually sinking, and drawing mine down with it; instead of your having that bright affiance in God, which spreads the warmth and light that you get from Him, on every thing around!”

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Three days after that, we were again sitting in the same place, when the servant brought out the letters to us. Mary had one from abroad, which she opened with delight.

I too had one, and with horror saw above the direction, in printed letters: “On His Majesty’s service.” I tore it open; and with feelings impossible to describe, read, that my promotion had been given me; and that I was appointed to the —— which was already commissioned, and would sail in a fortnight. My agony was so great, that I could hardly read to the end; but forcing myself to do so, I found that most unmerited praise was bestowed upon me—the letter stating, that in consequence of the very high character given me by Captain Normanton, and his warm

recommendation, my promotion had been given me, though wholly unsolicited by myself.

I crushed the paper in my madness, and starting up furiously, raised my hand to Heaven, exclaiming in wild revenge:

“Now may God’s——”

“Oh! curse him not! do not curse him!” exclaimed Mary, springing up, and throwing her arms round my neck; “I feel what it is, but do not curse him—do not curse him.”

Her voice grew fainter, and fainter, and her head sunk heavily on my breast. My arms relaxed from their fierce tension; and as I folded them round her sinking form, I felt with tenfold force the weight of the trial that had fallen upon me. My heart heaved with the mighty passions which contended within it; till at last, to relieve my brain, torrents of tears burst forth, falling over Mary’s pale forehead and shining hair.

My mother ran to us.

“My dearest Wilfred,” she exclaimed, “what is the matter?”

I shook my head—incapable of speaking; while with her help I placed Mary in a chair. I was terrified; I had heard of people’s fainting, but had never seen anything of the kind before; and Mary’s insensibility, and death-like paleness made me think she was dying. My mother, who saw my horror-stricken countenance, told me not to be afraid, for

that it was only faintness ; and bid me run to the house and get some water. I flew there ; but how I got it, I have no conception, my mind was so completely bewildered. However I did get it, and hastened back as fast as possible. Mary was still insensible, and her head resting on my mother's shoulder, who was kneeling by her, and endeavouring, by chafing her hands, to restore animation. By her direction I bathed her forehead ; and soon, to my inexpressible relief, I saw by the slight quivering of her lip and her short convulsive sighs, that consciousness was returning ; and soon, alas ! the large tears which gathered slowly beneath her closed lids, showed that the sense of suffering was also restored.

Again my mother looked at me and whispered :

“ What is it, Wilfred ? ”

“ He is going,” murmured Mary, who had caught the words ; and turning to her she threw herself on her neck, and in silence they wept in each other's arms ; while I stood by with hard dry eye, and fire at my heart.

I felt convinced that what had overcome Mary so much was not only the pain of parting, but the horror of seeing me in such a state of excited passion, and of knowing that fearful curses were bursting from my lips. God forgive me ! but it was a fearful moment !

My mother turned to me and said :

“What have you heard?”

I answered by picking up the letter, and putting it into her hand. She read it; and when she came to the part which mentioned Captain Normanton's share in the event, she looked up at me with a countenance full of trouble and uneasiness; and throwing her arms again round Mary, folded her anew with passionate affection to her heart, as if she would thus have shielded her from every harm.

The old General having seen us from the window, now came out.

“What's the matter?” he demanded, in a half frightened, half angry voice.

I went to meet him, and told him of the letter I had received; and said that the suddenness of the summons had rather overcome Mary; adding, that I feared that the violence of my anger had also contributed to agitate her.

“Violence of your anger!” he exclaimed; “why should you be violent or angry at all?”

“I did not wish to have gone, Sir,” I replied; “and do not approve of Captain Normanton's having applied for my promotion, when I did not ask for it myself.”

“At any rate,” he said with a sort of cross good humour, “you need not be angry because you get a good thing without having stooped to ask for it. ‘Some men achieve greatness, and some have

greatness thrust upon them,' as our famous dramatist says; and I suppose you are of the latter rare and fortunate kind of people. However, I will say that I shall be very sorry to lose you—very."

We had now reached my mother and Mary. At the sight of the latter, he seemed quite overcome. He went to her and took her hand, and passed his own soothingly over her still wet cheek, but seemed as if he could not speak. He sat down by her side. At last, making an effort to be gay:

"So you're very sorry, are you Mary?" he said, "that this young scapegrace is going to be kept in order a little. Well, never mind, he'll come back all the better for it; we have been ruining him here among us."

She could not answer.

"Let me see this famous letter which has caused such dismay," he continued. "They who sent it little thought of the reception their good news, as they doubtless considered them, would meet with: tears and rage, instead of smiles and gratitude! I confess that the rage surprises me, though the tears perhaps don't." And the old man sighed.

My mother gave him the letter. He read it, and seemed highly delighted; and jumping round on his chair he seized my hand, and shook it vehemently.

"Very handsome!" he exclaimed; "very handsome indeed! highly complimentary! And pray,

my young lieutenant, if this moves your wrath, what beneath the constellations might be thought worthy of striking the spark of gratitude out of your flinty heart?"

"I did not, as I have said before Sir, wish to go away at all at present; and if Captain Normanton had not had his own ends in view, he would never have acted as he has done."

"I don't see what ends he can have in view in getting your promotion," said the General; "excepting to serve you. What could it have signified to him if you had died at eighty-nine of being a midshipman, eh?"

An imploring look from Mary prevented my saying more; and the old man turning round again, seemed anew melted at the sight of her distress, and that of my mother.

"My dear Madam!" he exclaimed, addressing the latter; "we have forgotten you in this trying moment;—you who have more cause to lament this young fellow's absence almost than any of us. You will forgive our selfishness." And he took her hand and kissed it, with the chivalrous respect which always marked his manner to her.

She was much overcome; and, moved to the heart, I went and tried to comfort her.

"Come, come, my dear Madam!" said the old man cheerfully, yet feelingly; "we must not have you so downcast. Our young sailor will soon

return, and then I shouldn't wonder if he tried to refresh my memory about some wild, foolish question he once asked me; and if he does not set fire to his ship, or knock the Captain on the head to get the command himself,—why there's no saying what answer he may receive. Come, we must look forward to brighter days."

His words threw me into an agitation that it is impossible to describe. I longed to implore him as the only mitigation of the sufferings of that hour—not one quarter of which he guessed—to give without further delay that formal consent to our engagement, which alone could tranquillize my mind as regarded Mary during my absence; but the more intense my anxiety became for him to do so, the more utterly was I incapable of mastering my voice to ask it. The only thing I could do, was at last to stoop down to my mother, and whisper to her to ask him.

"He will do it for you;" I added, "and *you* know why we wish it so earnestly."

"What is he saying there?" asked the General, with the merriest possible look in his peering grey eye; "is he saying he had hoped I had forgotten all about that by this time? Eh?"

"Quite the contrary," replied my mother, trying to respond to his cheerful tone; "he was begging me to entreat you to give your consent now, before he goes."

“Humph! that’s rather quick upon me,” he replied; pretending crossness, but twisting his features into a wonderful form as he always did, when in particularly good humour; “why the boy’s not out of his teens yet! Pshaw! my dear Madam, get him a kite and hoop, and bat and ball; they would suit him better a great deal, than a wife. You shouldn’t put the noose round the colt’s head too soon; let him have his gallop round the paddock, before he is put into training.”

“I’ve been in training some time, Sir,” I answered smiling; “and am now quite ready to put on the harness. You cannot deny me my request, dear Sir,” I added with deep emotion, as I dropped on one knee at his side, and took his hand and kissed it.

Mary knelt by him on the other side, and kissed the hand she held.

“Get away with you both,” he cried; making pretended efforts to rise. “Let me get up; I won’t be handcuffed in this way. Let me get up, I say.”

But we smilingly put each a hand upon his arm, and said he should not stir till he had given his consent. He continued making violent feints at rising, till at last pretending exhaustion, and sinking back in his chair, he exclaimed:

“Very well! now remember,—I protest beforehand against anything I may say, forced from

me in this way by compulsion, and under bodily terror. I take you to witness, my dear Madam."

My mother replied that she feared she was too much interested in the matter for her testimony to be relied on; adding in a more earnest tone, that if she did not think that the wish expressed by his own dear child would be all prevalent with him, she would join her voice too to the petition, and beseech him to give the consent that was so much desired.

"And what is the mighty advantage you are expecting from the puff of modulated air you are all bent on extracting from this crazy old body of mine?" he asked, turning his head backwards and forwards from one to the other, with the most comic expression of countenance.

"Oh, you must yield to your love, my father, not to our reasons," said Mary; lifting her eyes to him with a look that could not be resisted. The old man gazed on her with admiring love; and smiling down upon her, said:

"That shows that you have but little reason to plead, doesn't it?"

"Then you will have the more love to show," she replied; putting her arm round his neck and drawing down his face to rest upon her dear cheek. He left it there a moment; and put his arm round her, pressing her to him. Then starting upright again, he exclaimed:

“ All bribery and corruption ! treason and treachery ! wiles and wickedness ! However I suppose I’m not to have a moment’s peace, or to enjoy a quiet meal till I’ve obeyed orders ; so had best do it at once. Well then,” he continued, almost solemnly, “ as you will have it so, my dear children—my foolish children ! I will consent to your being engaged from this time ;—but your marriage must depend upon God’s giving you the means ;—and may His blessing rest upon you ! ”

He joined our hands together as he spoke ; then placed his own on our heads, as we bent them reverently for his benediction.

My heart sprung up in relief unspeakable, and in gratitude unbounded, to God !

The desired consent was gained ! and it seemed as if nothing now could trouble me. The pain even of our near parting was for the moment forgotten. I could scarcely speak ; it seemed as if—were I, to open my lips,—a portion of my happiness would escape. My heart was as

“ a sealed fountain

Bounding secretly with joy unseen ; and keeping down  
its ecstasy of pleasure.”

I could have prolonged that hour through centuries !

## CHAPTER XXII.

By "hallowing" God's name is meant, keeping it separate from all other names; preserving it as the special treasure of our spirits; not suffering the idea of absolute holiness, purity, goodness, to be soiled by any defilements from without, or from within.—MAURICE ON "THE LORD'S PRAYER."

What is it to be parted? 'Tis to dwell  
Enshrined within the heart's most sacred cell;  
Amid its deepest prayers and holiest love,  
And musing thought that makes its home above,  
And mounting hope, and faith's exalted trust,  
That looks beyond this world's decaying dust;  
And thus to have our blessed portion given,  
'Mid things of earth that are the nearest Heaven.  
Yes, this—yes, this is parting!

UNPUBLISHED POEMS.

"TELL me, Mary," I said a few days after that happy hour, "what was it that overcame you so much when that letter about my appointment came?"

"It was very sudden," she replied; "and you seemed so —. It was a mixture of many feelings."

"Don't fear making me feel my wickedness," I said; "but tell me,—was it not that my passion was so great, and that you saw I was ready to curse that man?"

"Perhaps it was," she replied, with the peculiar gentleness and feeling with which she ever touched on a point of blame in another;—"I felt as if I could not bear to hear you pronounce a curse, it seems such a fearful thing!"

"I was afraid it was that, and have to implore your pardon a thousand times for my violence. But you will grant that I had just cause for anger."

"No one could help feeling it at such conduct as Captain Normanton's. And I am sure it was only at the first moment, when your mind was so on fire, that you could have felt tempted to wish him any evil. You could not do so now?"

"No, I could not. And yet it is a bitter wrong he has done me! But tell me that you forgive my violence and impiety."

"Oh, Wilfred! you know I do; and I am sure that even had you uttered the words,—such an outburst under such provocation could not have been half so offensive to God, as the careless, habitual profanation of His name, which is so common with many men. The continually calling upon Him for

every foolish, or wicked thing, is such a frightful sin !”

“ But surely, Mary, very few men would ever swear before you. I observed how particular many of them were about it on board ship, who swore incessantly when out of your hearing.”

“ I could scarcely have thanked them for attending to me, when they so disregarded God,” she replied. “ If they could watch over themselves, for a woman’s sake, they might surely have done so for God’s. It is a fearful sentence against them : ‘ The Lord will not hold them *guiltless*.’ It seems so strange that those who weary themselves so, as to the uncertain future of this life, should so wholly forget the irrevocable things of the next ;— who feel so much about the things just around them, should forget how blessed is that country, which will be the eternal home of those who love their God.”

“ One need though often look to it,” I observed — “ to the ‘ blue openings between the tangled stems,’ in order to keep up any buoyancy of mind at all sometimes ; such times, for instance, as our parting will be. Oh, Mary ! I do strive not to think of it—not to sink in utter misery ! but you must be patient with me, as you know our God will. I have not your strong faith, nor your bright springful heart. And remember too, how far easier it is to bear a burthen for one’s self than for

another whom we love! A sea life is certainly always a hard one, and without Bruce, the ocean will seem a desert to me; but still that is nothing to the thought of leaving you to the miserable companionship of your poor father, and to the persecutions of that man. And yet I do too, at times feel the comfort of being able to commit you to the care of One whose love is—oh! can it be?—greater than my own! I can place you in His everlasting arms, and feel the shadow of His mighty wing protecting you. Oh, my beloved!—oh! my beloved! how past endurance would be the pain of parting were it not for that! You will think of me in everything—will you not? You will write to me,—you will pray for me,—you will let your spirit be ever with mine—you will feel for me,—do all but weep for me! I could not bear that! No, think of me as daily gaining heavenly strength, as daily becoming more worthy of your love, less unworthy of God's. Speak to me in heart, Mary! and as each day passes away, remember that we are a day nearer to meeting again,—nearer too to God's blest, unparting Heaven! But, dearest love," I added, seeing her much moved, "is there only bright faith enough for one of us, that when I catch a little of its glow, it should leave your heart, and that those sad tears should fall?"

"They are not sad," she replied; "such tears

might almost flow in Heaven, and not need the All-merciful hand to wipe them away; it is so delightful to hear you speak of heavenly consolation."

A shiver of happiness passed through me as I heard her say this!

"Legions of thrilling thoughts thronged about the standard of my mind."

But who might analyze them? Oh, will language ever be given us to express what we feel? or will Heaven itself exceed the rolling volumes of its celestial speech?

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The hour of my departure at length approached. Nor love, nor grief can stay Time's "rushing pinions,—on he sweeps!"

And well it is it should be so! for our natures here have nothing of abiding in them. Blessed be God that in His deep compassion He sent the flaming sword to guard the way of the Tree of Life, lest, in his miserable state, man should put forth his hand, and take of its fruit and live for ever! And blessed, for ever blessed be His name! that that flaming sword is turned aside at Christ's all-powerful word, for those who seek salvation through His blood; and that to them He giveth "right to the Tree of Life." In them, made one with Him and with the Father, the principle of

immortality is implanted ; and on them “ the second death hath no power.” “ Whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

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The hour of my departure, as I have said, approached—and I must go ! It is needless to dwell upon it ! It was one of those partings, such

“ As press the life from out young hearts ;”

but it must be done—and we parted !

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I had business which detained me for a day in London, and I there met Bruce. I had written to tell him of the accomplishment of his prophecies ; but when I met him, not one word did he say on the subject. Though rough occasionally in his way of speaking, there lived not a being more thoroughly delicate in his perceptions when anything of real trial was concerned. There was an expression of sadness mingled with his cordial greeting when we met ; but he did not seem inclined to say much on the subject of my departure. Not one of his old warnings was repeated, or alluded to ; on the contrary, he tried rather to cheer my spirits, and spoke of glad return, and a happy future. Still something seemed to weigh upon him, and conversation for the first time in our lives flagged between us. We were

again on our way to the Admiralty, where I had business now, when at last he said :

“ You know your destination, don't you ? ”

“ No,” I replied ; “ they did not tell me.”

“ It was not said at first,” he answered in a lowered voice ; “ but I heard yesterday—and it is—the African station.”

I stopped short, and so did he : but he avoided catching my eye. I felt for a moment as if all the blood had deserted my heart. Yet it was not from apprehension of that deadly climate, for I had faith enough to feel that with God's blessing I was as safe in one place as another ; but it was from the horrible feeling of moral guilt. A conviction flashed over me, that my appointment to that station was Captain Normanton's doing. I felt as if he were a murderer in his heart ; and the horror with which that thought inspired me, quite paralyzed me for the moment. Bruce, I fancied, read my thoughts, but did not answer to them ; and indeed the next instant I rejected them myself with indignation. Captain Normanton a murderer ! Impossible ! And the blood rushed hot all over me again with shame for having harboured the thought for an instant.—Bruce moved on and I mechanically followed him.

“ It is not so often fatal to sailors,” he remarked.

“ ‘ Not a sparrow falls without God to the

ground," I replied; "and He will not take my life away unless He sees a deep need for it. 'Ce que Dieu garde, est bien gardé.'"

We walked on in silence.

"St. Clair," at length said Bruce.

"Well," I answered.

"I've never been down to Dover yet."

"I know it," I replied; for he paused as if expecting some observation.

"But I shall go there now—soon. You're off guard, so I shall go on. I'm not going to let that 'fellow' have it all his own way."

"You are the best fellow!" I exclaimed. "But do not do anything that may cause you pain."

"If it does," he replied hurriedly; "I shall be repaid if I am able to be of any comfort to either of you."

"It would," I said, "certainly be the greatest comfort to me to know that your eye was over her, and that Captain Normanton knew it too—and felt it; and it might be a great support to her; for the old man is nought, and my mother is too gentle and timid to keep such a man as that in his proper place, even should she continue to live with them,—which I fervently pray she may, though I cannot be sure of it when the term of the present house is up, which it will be in about a month."

"Where does General Sydney go then?"

"I don't know, nor does he."

“ Well, I shall go down, and occupy the ground before the enemy comes up ; for he’s away in Scotland I know now. He put the fuse in the shell, and escaped before the explosion. But he shall not be in my company half an hour, before he knows how futile all his plots and schemes will be, as regards your engagement to Miss Sydney at least.”

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I parted with this true friend with a regret second only to that which rent my heart at leaving Mary, and my mother ; and set off the next day to join my ship at Portsmouth.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Era già l'ora, che volge'l desio  
 A' naviganti, e'ntenerisce'l cuore  
 Lo dì, ch'han detto a'dolci amici a Dio.

DANTE. PURGATORIO.

Each word we speak has infinite effect.  
 Each soul we pass must go to heaven or hell.  
 And this our one chance through eternity :  
 To drop and die like dead leaves on the brake,  
 Or like the meteor-stone       \*       \*       \*  
 Kindle the dry moors into fruitful blaze,  
       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Be earnest, earnest, earnest,—mad if you will !  
 Do what thou dost, as if the stake were heaven,  
 And that, thy last deed e'er the judgment-day.

THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY.

He is retired as noon-tide dew,  
 Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;  
 And you must love him, ere to you,  
 He will seem worthy of your love.

WORDSWORTH.

It was evening when I went on board the  
 vessel that was to bear me to those fatal shores,

where physical evil vies—though at a far distance—with the moral atrocity which makes that devoted clime a very spiracle of the infernal regions.

After having gone through all the business of reporting myself, seeing the Captain — Captain Seymour—stowing away my things, &c., I went on deck and looked about me. My eye watched every face in the ship, as it passed; but not one of the hundreds in that little ocean-home had I ever seen before; and the desolation of solitude seemed added to that of sorrow. I should have been glad to have seen even the cabin-boy's face, who had served with me in the old ship;—any one in short,—excepting *one*.

I turned, and looked towards the point where those I loved were—mourning I knew, my absence; and my soul seemed to rush into their beloved presence. I had found a letter from Mary on my arrival at Portsmouth; and what a doubly delightful character did it bear in my eyes: as coming from her, and from her as my now affianced wife! She did not then know of my destination; but I had written to tell her of it.

I was thinking of all these things, and living with the absent, forgetful of the beings around me, when a rough, but at last a well-known voice, spoke at my side; and turning round I saw the tanned, but pleasant face of our old Captain's coxswain of the ——. I was quite delighted at seeing

him,—his appearance recalling in an instant vividly before me, the old ship and all my dear companions, Bruce, D'Arcy—Mary !

“ I heard your honour was coming among us,” said the old seaman ; “ and was glad to think of serving again aboard the same ship with you.”

“ Thank you, Lawrence,” I replied ; “ I can say the same to you ; for the sight of your face is very cheering, among so many strangers, and brings the good old times quite back to one's mind.”

“ All hearty at home, I hope, Sir, whoever may be there,” he said.

“ All well, thank you. How is all with you ?”

“ Not so well as might be, your honour,” replied the old man, smoothing down his thin hair with his hand, and looking up at me with an expression of meek resignation ; “ my old woman's gone, and the lad broke his arm ; but that was well again afore I left.”

“ I'm sorry to hear you've had so much trouble,” I said ;—“ very sorry ; I should like to see all the world happy. But we must wait a little longer for that.”

“ We must take two or three sails round the globe, I fancy, afore we shall come to the land where that's the case,” he said ; drumming with his fingers nervously against the ship's side.

“ And not find it then,” I answered.

“ No,—not find it then,” he replied. “ Some

people talk of Heaven as a fine place ; but, bless me ! what do they know about it ? Whose been up there to tell 'em, I wonder."

"There was One who came down from thence to tell us," I said ; "and to teach us the way to it."

The old man shook his head.

"Ah ! so they tell us. I take it he didn't get many to go back with him though !—Yes, I have heard talk of some such thing as that."

"Well, we'll talk still more of it, some of these days, Lawrence."

"If you're agreeable, Sir, I am," he answered ; "there an't, so much good luck here, as that one need throw away a chance of sommut better elsewhere.—But may I ask ?" he continued,— "no offence I hope, Sir,—that young lady, Miss Sydney I think they called her—she's well I hope."

"She is quite well, thank you," I replied ; "I left her only the day before yesterday ; for do you know, old shipmate, she is to be my wife some day."

"I thought as much, that I did," he said with a smile, and little bow of mingled respect and gratulation ; "and I think, if I'm not too bold to say it, neither one nor t'other of you's gone far amiss as to choice. Ah, well !" he added mournfully, as he walked away, "that's the way of it ; one loses—and another gets."

I looked after him with a painful *serrement de cœur* ! it is so sad to witness grief ! and there was something so touching in the quiet sorrow of this rough old seaman. I thought with shame of my own murmurings, and despondency ; and resolved to fight against them, and to strive to divert them, by endeavouring to be, while at sea, what Mary was on land : a light, and strength, and joy to those around.

“ Oh ! God of Heaven ! ” I mentally exclaimed ; “ I cannot, as my Lord did, say ‘ Peace ’ to the waves that roll beneath, and to the winds that rage around one on this wild element ; yet, taught by Thee, let me speak comfort to the troubled heart, and peace to the stormy passions of men. Let me be a messenger of mercy from Thee to these rough and untaught, these tried and tempted creatures of Thy hand, and do Thou bless me in the work ; for ‘ beautiful,’ not only ‘ upon the mountains,’ but also on the boundless, pathless deep ‘ are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes salvation.’ ”

Long did I dwell upon this delightful thought ; and such animation and elevation of heart did it give me, that when I turned again from gazing towards my heart’s home, to look around at all the various forms and countenances of my new companions, instead of considering them any longer as strangers, I felt they were brethren, united in one

common bond of joys and sufferings with myself; creatures of the same Creator, and capable of being partakers of the same blest and heavenly calling. A glow of kindliness warmed my heart towards them all; and from the happiness it imparted, I began to understand somewhat of the truth of St. Paul's words: "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him."

Soon after, on walking aft, I observed a fair childish looking lad, who had apparently just joined for his first voyage; and who stood there pale and disconsolate, speaking to no one. I had no personal experience myself of the misery of that first desolate feeling of being sent from home, and cast on the cold charities of our outwardly frigid natures; I had had friends on board the vessel in which I first sailed; and possessed moreover that cosmopolitan disposition which always fastened on whatever suited it, let it be in what place, or belong to what country it might. Friends I must have, so friends I had. But with our generally reserved, and "hermit natures," this is not often the case; and I have known some boys, and men too, suffer intensely on joining a new ship. Who but has been touched to the quick by the misery and wretchedness expressed by Nelson—that heart of fire!—on his first joining?

Pitying the poor lad therefore, I went up to him, and tried to cheer him;—talked of the sea, the

ships, the view, the strange countries we should visit, starry nights we should see, &c. But all in vain, nothing but low monosyllables could I obtain in reply, and not always them. Then I spoke of his home, and then the colour rose in his face, and his eye was raised to mine ; and more than monosyllables flowed forth. He had no mother it seemed, but a father, and a brother, a little older, than himself. His heart opened wide now ; and deep down in its inmost windings this elder brother evidently lay. He had given him this—and this—and this—bringing forth at intervals, the pencil-case—the seal—the penknife, &c. : —cherished gifts of this brother's love ; on each of which, after being displayed on the open hand a moment, the small fingers closed again with a clutch, as if the kind hand that had given them were there instead. He was now all life—Pygmalion's statue animated by the spirit of love !

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There is perhaps no tie in life which is so influential, or compounded of such a variety of ingredients, as that between an affectionate younger brother, and a kind elder one. Father and mother may be loved devotedly ; but that is but *one* feeling, though a most pure and perfect one. It is a something with which the prospects of his own existence have but little to do ; which lies simply in the heart, like a pearl in its shell. He never

expects to be like his mother ! never wishes probably to be like his father ;—there is too great a distance between them for his uncalculating mind to follow the links that bind the boy to the mature man. Politics—war—justice-meetings country-business—are to him parts of a far-off, dry state of being, with which he has little or no sympathy. They belong to a domain which he has never entered, as his sports and amusements belong to one his father has for ever left ; and no instinctive wish would ever lead either over the other's boundary.

But the tie to the brother a few years older, is on the contrary a transfusion of himself into that brother ; a tie less pure, less disinterested perhaps than the other, but more natural, therefore more strong. He looks upon this brother as a being, far indeed his superior, but still of the same order as himself:—many of his amusements lying on the outskirts of his tastes and habits. He glories in the reflected lustre of his magnificent leaps, his bowlings, and battings—and feels that they are things which he himself may soon emulate. He looks to his tremendous liberty of boating, and sailing, and riding, &c., as to a region whose full glories he is able perfectly to appreciate, and eagerly to anticipate. And when this brother kindly associates him sometimes as a humble companion in his games, and pursuits,—then

the pride and joy of his heart are unbounded! His brother's words are to him as oracles—his deeds, perfection! What power then does he possess! How used!—let elder brother's well consider.

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But to return to the little younger brother in question. His shyness and depression were all gone, and his sparkling eyes, and glowing cheeks seemed actually to radiate light. How often is this the case with outwardly cold-seeming characters!—break through the crusting snow, and up leaps the Geser!

He was by my side all the rest of the evening; hanging a little behind, unless when I spoke to him, or stopped to do anything, when he came flush up with me for a moment; then again fell back, fearful as it seemed of being obtrusive, yet impelled to follow any one who would take him from the blank corner of forgotten existence which he had occupied before. He was very grateful, poor lad! for slight cause; and proved it afterwards in anything but a slight way. Truly

‘Those hours are not lost, that are spent in cementing affection.’

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That night, the wind being favourable, we weighed, and stood down channel smoothly and

easily ; and the breeze afterwards freshening, brought us in fine style into Plymouth Sound, where we had to take on board some of the officers who had not yet joined.

It was at Plymouth that I had joined my first ship, seven years before ; and as we lay there then for some days, my delight was to ramble about in the delightful grounds of Mount Edgecumbe. It was summer, and no one was there at the time ; and all my hours of leave were spent there.

How I remember enjoying that first burst of perfect freedom ! And the place was so beautiful ! with its soft slopes and sunny lawns, and gardens of various fashions, its picturesque cottages, its wood-walks, and glades where the deer couched amid the fern. Then the charm of the blue sea, which here broke in wavelets on the shores of the little coves and inlets, there sent its dancing spray among the red berries of the arbutuses which grow into absolute trees, feathering down to the very waves ; and then again came breasting high against the wall of rocks, with such a depth of water that the hand might fling a stone from the walk above, or to the deck of the frigate that sailed beneath. These, and the fine views around, formed a combination of beauties unrivalled in our isle ; and associated as they were with the bounding happiness of my untried boyhood, ever made me hail the

most distant view of the high grounds, and blue woods of Mount Edgecumbe with a pleasure quite indescribable !

It was twilight; and the well-known outline was all that was visible when we anchored in the Sound. I turned into my hammock at a late hour that night; having loved to linger on the scene till the last rays of the moon, as well as of the sun, had faded away. And next day when

“The morn had risen clear and calm,  
And o’er the green sea palely shone,”

aye!—and almost before that—I was again up and about, looking with fresh delight on all around. And lo! a new pleasure was prepared for me! for there, in perfect beauty, “sleeping on her own shadow,” I beheld my own beloved old frigate, the ——. A cry of joy escaped me as I recognized her; and I felt an instant impulse to throw myself over into the water, and swim to her side. Restraining my rapture however within due bounds, I contented myself with first seeking out Lawrence, and showing her to him; and then pointing her out, with all her matchless proportions, to whoever of the sailors and officers I could get to listen to me.

“That’s she, sure enough,” exclaimed the old coxswain, shading his eyes with his hand that

he might see her the better. "That's she; there's no mistaking her. There's never another as can come up to her!"

"There's nothing like her in the world," I exclaimed. "What would I give to be on board her again, just spreading out her canvass to catch the breeze off Nice."

"Very like, Sir," said my companion with a smile. "And yet they did say, somehow then, that you and the Captain there, didn't always set your sails alike."

"The Captain was an excellent officer," I replied, a little displeasure in my tone; "and behaved very handsomely to me, when I didn't much deserve it, Lawrence; and better discipline was never kept in any vessel of His Majesty's fleet than Captain Normanton kept on board the ——."

"Right Sir," replied the old man in a deprecating tone; "and I meant no offence, Sir, to you, nor to none as is absent. Yes! sure enough there never was a steadier hand on board than our Captain's, and that's it. It ain't your gentleman as goes off like a rocket one minute, and let's a man slip his duty the next—to make up for it, as 'll ever keep the spirits down; it's him as has always a taut hand on 'em; the same when you pipe to dinner, as when you clear for action. You always knows where you

are with such a Captain as that. Keep to your duty, and you're sure to be right."

"Well! that's high praise, isn't it?" I said. "And I can add still higher too, which is that he never set either officers or men a bad example in his life; and I'm afraid that's more than can be said for most navy Captains."

While I was speaking, young Somerville—my new friend—came up to me with the greatest animation in his face, telling me that his uncle was the Captain of the —— "that beautiful frigate," as he truly called her; and that he was to go on board to see him.

"Oh! I must go too," I exclaimed. "I'd give the world to go over her again."

The boy was off like a shot; returning in a few minutes with greater glee than before; panting with running and eagerness, as, waving his cap with a 'hurrah,' he exclaimed:

"You're to go, I've asked our Captain, and told him it was your old ship; and he said you might go."

I thanked my little friend heartily; and soon with bounding spirit jumped into the boat which had been lowered for our trip. As we neared the frigate, how splendid she looked! She had been newly-painted, and much of her rigging was fresh; and they had certainly turned her out of the dock-yard, the completest thing that ever was seen!

“How Mary would admire her now!” I thought. The recollection of her however, sobered my spirits a little, and with mingled pain and delight did I again mount the deck I had so often trod with her.

But thoughts of the past were quickly dispersed, by young Somerville’s introducing me to his uncle; which he did in a paroxysm of nervous ecstasy, looking from one to the other to see what effect we produced on each other; and certainly the effect produced on me by Captain Somerville was particularly pleasant. I soon requested to be allowed to go over the ship, which was very readily granted, the Captain himself volunteering to accompany me.

We went down, and visited first the mess-room. On entering it, I started, as if I had seen a ghost; for there, though in living bodily presence, stood—old Palgrave! just as if I had only left him there five minutes before. He seemed equally astonished at the sight of me, and turned all sorts of colours; rising hastily from his chair, and holding it by the back, as if he were ready to defend himself against some onslaught he seemed to expect me to make. None however did I meditate; and the sight of an old face in the old place, was delightful. Springing towards him, I seized him by the hand, exclaiming:

“Palgrave! old fellow! why how came you here?”

“St. Clair! old fellow! why how came *you*

here?" he replied; his volatile mind changing in an instant from fright to fun.

"I came to take a look at our old quarters," I replied; "but little thought to find an old shipmate. I didn't know you were appointed to her again; I wish I had been with all my heart."

"I should have been very happy to have had you with me," said Captain Somerville; "and I am glad you have had such a pleasant meeting here. You, and Mr. Palgrave were together then in the Mediterranean?"

"Yes, Sir."

"You were great friends then, I suppose?"

Palgrave and I exchanged glances in the most ludicrous manner; putting each other, as it were, into each other's confidence, as to our *not* having been great friends;—and from that moment we really became such.

"We didn't quarrel many times, Sir," he said; in the mildest of tones.

"Well then, perhaps you may prefer being alone together a little," said Captain Somerville; so I will leave you to Mr. Palgrave's care, Mr. St. Clair, and shall be very happy to see you again on deck when you have looked about you as much as you like below."

I thanked him; and thought him—what I think him still—the most courteous and gentlemanlike-man (almost synonymous terms) I ever met with.

What a charm it is ! and what a duty too ! as binding upon us as any other in life. We are so apt to forget that "Thou shalt do no murder," and "Be courteous," are written in the same book—equally binding.

What a difference did this one man's way of speaking make in my feelings at that time ! I had been rather sad at looking at my old home—no longer mine ; but soon there was such a warmth sent through my heart by the kindly words and manners of this stranger, that my spirits felt quite cheered, and as I went over all my old accustomed haunts, I saw only the bright side of things ; and when, after having been everywhere, and taking leave of him, I descended the ladder to return to my own vessel, I felt a double regret that my lot was not again cast on board my dear old frigate.

I found also much really to like in Palgrave ; he spoke of the old times, and our old shipmates so pleasantly ; and seemed so perfectly to have forgiven the extremities to which I had proceeded with him, and the mortifications which had ensued thereon—expressing, indeed, his sincere regret at the conduct which had occasioned them,—that I could not but feel quite kindly towards him ; and when we shook hands at the well known gangway, which I had passed so often,—and with what multitudinous feelings !—I parted from him with a sentiment of sincere regret, and real regard.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Oh ! that human love  
Should be the root of this dread bitterness.

A word unspoken, is your own—spoken it is another's.  
Unspoken — you are its master ; — spoken — it is your  
tyrant.

Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.  
And the tongue is a fire ; a world of iniquity.

ST. JAMES III. 5-6.

WHEN I returned on board, I found two letters waiting for me ; one from Mary, the other from Bruce. I opened the letter (which from its size, indeed, might rather have been called a packet than a letter), and read that first ; for I liked to “ keep my best till last.”

Its contents threw me into the greatest state of agitation.

“ I was sure,” he wrote, “ that you would like before you finally launched forth on the great deep,

to have the report of an eye-witness as to your affairs at home ; so I ran down to take a survey of my ' station.' I found Miss Sydney looking as she was sure to do, only not quite so joyous as usual—the only change, perhaps, which you would like to hear of. She seemed surprised at seeing me, and not quite pleased I thought ; till I contrived at a quiet moment to tell her one of the reasons of my appearance—namely : the having constituted myself as your reporter concerning her health and well-being during your absence. The other : the intention of acting scare-crow to the unfortunate Captain,—I did not venture to hint at, fearing it might distress her. A very short time elapsed, however, before I was called upon to assume the dignified position assigned to that animated class of characters ; for, though I had thought him in Scotland, lo ! a ring at the house-door ; and lo ! an opening of the room door ; and lo ! the “ pilfering daw,” whom I was to chase from the golden fruit. At the sound of his name, Miss Sydney, by whose side I had been sitting on the sofa, turned deadly pale, and I thought she was going to faint. But with an evident effort she recovered her self-possession ; and rising as he approached her, she received him with that calm grace and dignity, which you have seen too often for me to be obliged to describe. He, poor man ! (for through certain weak and porous parts of my composition a little frater-feeling

sometimes filters in), seemed so absorbed by the brightness of the sun of his worship, that my meaner rays were for a moment (for the first time in my life, I flatter myself), eclipsed. To avoid the risk of being run down (and a little from the 'Middy's' old respect and awe), I had not only risen on his entrance, but had stood aside to allow him sea-room, as he sailed up,—every stitch of canvass set,—and bore down in splendid style upon his prize (as he hoped). But after the first broadside, when the smoke had cleared away a little (I know you like me to be nautical, and parenthetical!) he discovered a strange sail alongside, (strange enough he seemed to think it and bristling with guns he soon found it;) and turning to see what it was—saw what it was. I thought *he* would have fainted then, he seemed taken aback in such an awful style; just as if he had fallen in with the 'phantom ship,'—or with you again. 'Nil admirari' is a lesson he has yet to learn, I perceive; and certainly I stretched his wondering powers to the utmost that day.

"I *can* be cool when I like it, as I dare say you know; and on an impartial review of my conduct, I think I was so on that occasion. I need not give you all the programme of the emotions he had to go through; or record the varyings of his dying-dolphin hues. Suffice it to say that Dolphin didn't die; but coming round after a time, seemed to have serious thoughts of taking up the position along-

side the 'prize,' which I had occupied before. Seeing this, I slid into it sideways, with the most easy grace imaginable; addressing some observation to Miss Sydney, with a cheerful familiarity, and dandified ease, which nothing but the pressure of circumstances at the moment could ever have made me assume. She seemed again surprised, and again displeased — naturally — but a confidential look, which I contrived to give as our baffled friend turned to speak to your mother, made her smile with that playful turn of the lip which is such a peculiar beauty in her; and which made me feel that I was understood, and forgiven. The old General then came in, and greeted the Captain most warmly; but his *prévenance* had something so nervous, and ultra-courteous in it, that I confess it made me feel very uncomfortable; and proved to me without a doubt that your suspicion of our Captain's possessing an undue influence over him, was quite correct.

"If there is a point for uneasiness it is that; not as to ultimate results, of course; for I presume you feel as confident of Miss Sydney's constancy and truth, as I do; but I mean as to temporary discomfort for her. However, according to your old, or rather newly adopted principle, we will not go in search of the uncomfortable, but let the uncomfortable come in search of us—if it want us. After the first complimentary speeches, the

old gentleman exclaimed : ‘ Mary, my dear, have you seen Captain Normanton ?’ ‘ Yes,’ she replied quietly. He then turned to me saying : ‘ May I introduce our friend, Mr. Bruce to you, Captain Normanton ?’ ‘ I have already the pleasure of Mr. — Bruce’s acquaintance,’ replied the Captain, in a tone that showed I thought, that he didn’t at that moment quite properly appreciate the pleasure.

‘ You remember, my father,’ said Miss Sydney, (and how that mode of addressing him sent me back on board that blessed old —— again !) ‘ that Mr. Bruce was with us on board Captain Normanton’s ship.’ ‘ Oh yes ! how can I be such an old fool ?’ exclaimed the poor General. “ To be sure ! Why it was he who behaved so handsomely about the quarrel, and sent us word it was no fault of young St. Clair’s. I recollect it all now ; but my old brains get so confused. Yes !—very well he behaved, and very feelingly ; and it was not what every one would have done.’ (I repeat this lest Miss Sydney should forget to tell you of it.) And so he went on, seeming to lose in the overwhelming remembrance of my past merits, the sense of my present presence ; till his mind taking a fresh start, he turned with immense alacrity to to the Captain, exclaiming : ‘ By the bye, my dear Sir, we have a thousand thanks to give you for the very handsome way in which you spoke of young St. Clair to Lord ——, and for so unexpectedly

procuring his promotion. He hadn't the least idea of it himself; and seemed indeed, foolish boy! rather vexed about it; but it was most excessively kind of you."

"The poor Captain seemed ready to sink under the weight of his merits; and would gladly, I suspect, have been the most worthless of his kind, so he could have escaped this *exposé*, of his righteous deeds. But all in vain; for with ruthless gratitude did the old man continue to persecute him, till he seemed wrought to frenzy. Did compassion touch soft chords within my breast? Not a whit! They were strung to the tune of vengeance; and fiercely did I carry out the strain. I turned again towards my gentle companion, and begun,—with laboured sprightliness: 'Talking of absurdities, Miss Sydney, (which we had not been talking of,) I read such a story the other day,—in one of Miss Sinclair's amusing books, I think. Some old lady was advised to read the Bible, which she had never before, it seemed, done. She did so; and took to it amazingly, thinking it so very entertaining! Going into dinner with some Bishop a little while after, she thought it would quite suit him; so, in a lively, conversational tone said: 'What a shocking story that was, my Lord, about David and Uriah!' Meaning to point this at my victim, I looked at him full as I spoke. I was really horrified! The black blood rushed to his temples while his lips

turned perfectly white. His eyes flashed fire, as his restless glance shot from face to face. He seemed as if he would have sprung upon me like a tiger ! but he suddenly turned, and rushed out of the window on the lawn, where, as he stood with his back to us, I saw by his deep, awful inspirations, that he was trying to calm. And cool down the fire and fury within, and no wonder. I can't tell you how conscience-stricken I was, the moment the words had left my lips ; and how deeply I still regret (spite of my jocularly) ever having spoken them—they were so wholly unchristian, as well as so dastardly ! for how could the unfortunate man take notice of them when he must have known that to do so would have shewn that he felt their sting ? Most truly did, and do I grieve for them ; and needed not the look of quick reproach which Miss Sydney gave me—reproach mingled with so much surprise and embarrassment, that I suppose till then she was not aware that I was acquainted with Captain Normanton's feelings for her. ' Forgive me,' I said in a low, and really penitent voice. She shook her head, as her eyes dropped ; and the colour mantled painfully in her cheek. Mrs. St. Clair looked disturbed, while the General seemed in consternation at the Captain's sudden flight ; and kept looking from me to his daughter, and from her to me, from under his shaggy eyebrows, with most displeased and inquiring glances.

“ I would have given anything never to have been ! or to have been able to have gone out, and implored my victim’s pardon ! But that was impossible ! for what reason could I give for appearing to think that the story contained any more elements of disturbance for him than for others ? Something however must be done, for I felt sure that he never would be able to come back by himself, and face us all again, so must die where he stood ; so I suggested to Miss Sydney that we should go out to him. She acceded instantly ; showing thus most sweetly her double, kind forgiveness of him and of me ; and—I following her—went up to him, and in the most winning manner began speaking to him. ‘ You have been into Scotland, Captain Normanton, have you not ? ’ ”

“ He seemed incapable of answering ; and I never saw such painful emotion depicted on a countenance in my life. How I hated myself ! I could but send up my sinful heart to God, and implore forgiveness, and a kinder spirit. At last he murmured something, and she continued in a kind tone asking him about his journey. His answers gradually became less and less embarrassed, and he seemed evidently touched by her kindness. For a moment I saw him look at her ;—’twas but for a moment ; but I wish I had not seen it—the expression of his countenance haunted me for hours. Such a rush of almost woman’s

softness came over that stern brow, mingled with so much of sadness, as completely for the moment altered the whole man; and again I felt wretched at having added a needless pang to a heart already so sorely tried. Your mother, and the old man then joined us; and the conversation became more general. But as we walked about the garden, Captain Normanton got near me, and said in a low, constrained voice: 'I wish for some private conversation with you, Mr. Bruce.' I bowed my acquiescence; and he continued: 'If you are staying in this house, perhaps you will oblige me by taking a walk in the country; if not, we can perhaps return to Dover together.' 'I am not staying here,' I replied, 'but return to town to-night; so I can walk back with you to Dover.' 'Thank you,' he replied; and bowing slightly, in his dreadfully gentlemanlike manner, he returned to converse with General Sydney.

"Now did not 'my sin find me out?' You know that I have a horror of duelling; considering it wicked and childish;—wicked if you wish to kill—or be killed—childish if you don't;—bad any way. But, 'Here I am in for it,' I thought. 'In for what? Duelling?' No! certainly not;—for I was determined not to add sin to folly,—murder of the hand, to murder of the tongue;—but 'in for a challenge,' and then for what was much worse: the having to refuse it;

and then—contempt, and contumely, and disgrace ; —and a private hint from high quarters, enforced by public ones, from million eyes and tongues, that : ‘ I had better leave the service.’

“ This was all very pleasant ! But I am really thankful to say that not for one passing moment did my mind waver. I dare say there was a great deal of pride in this,—I am sure there was ; for somehow it is so difficult to keep oneself from that plague-spot, when one is making a sturdy stand against general opinion, even though for conscience sake ; and I could not but feel too, that those who do not mean to ‘ use daggers ’ should ‘ speak ’ none ; and sorely did I lament that haste and intemperance of spirit, which has so often brought me (and will I fear bring me still oftener, before it has done with me,) into sin and trouble. Not but that the evil lies far deeper with me, than mere heat and haste of temper ;—that is what you have, and I like it—as a choice of faults ; but mine is intolerance of mind, and hardness of opinion ; from which bitter roots, proceed naturally, bitter fruits. I grieve over them, I can’t tell you how much ; for they bring the cause of Christ into disrepute, and give so much occasion for His enemies to triumph ! How terrible when one really loves that Holy Being, to force Him to say : ‘ These wounds have I received in the house of my friend.

You have often spoken to me kindly, and faithfully about this, St. Clair; do so continually; and add to your cautions—prayers.

“After we had walked about a little while longer, we went into luncheon, ‘with what appetite we might;’ but that was not much. Nor did the ‘flow of soul’ proceed with us much better, so we two belligerents soon took our leave; feeling that we had shortened each other’s visits, and destroyed the pleasure of them too. (No bad thing perhaps.) We walked along in perfect silence, till we got to those meadows, which you have not forgotten, I dare say. When there, Captain Normanton begun. (And oh, what a commotion I was in, when he opened his fire; and how I longed to exclaim: ‘Tell me first of all whether you are going to call me out or not.’)

“‘Mr. Bruce,’ he said, ‘it would be useless after the agitation which I am conscious of having betrayed on your telling that absurd story at General Sydney’s, to pretend not to have perceived—coming as it did immediately upon the General’s thanking me for having procured Mr. St. Clair’s promotion and appointment—that it was aimed at me. A little consideration, however, will I am sure, make you feel the ungenerous nature of such an attack, leaving me as it did without remedy; for by taking notice of it as an affront, and resenting it as such in the way

usual amongst gentlemen, I should lay myself open for every one to say that I was conscious of the justice of the application ; and should therefore, expose myself publicly to ridicule.'

(Here I began to breathe.) 'Whether by my agitation I have done so with you or not,' he continued, 'I cannot judge ; it depends upon whether your mind sees anything ridiculous in the strong natural feelings of a man, and I may say, a gentleman—under a most cruel and slanderous attack,—or whether it does not.' (How I wished myself in the river !) 'I am inclined to think,' he continued,—in his measured, deliberate manner, which it seemed as if no agitation could accelerate, or emphasize,—'that you would not consider such feelings subject of mirth, or contempt ; and deeply, ineffaceably wounded as I have been by so foul a suspicion having ever even entered your mind, I must yet so far have regard to my honour, as to enter a little into explanations which may tend to clear me from it, and to show that I am not guilty of the murderous intentions which you seem to have attributed to me.'

"He stopped, and I walked by his side in mighty embarrassment, not liking even to hear my feet brush through the grass of the meadow—for I had left the pathway wholly to him, in my humility. Perhaps he expected me to speak ; and I wished to do so, but what could I say ?

I longed certainly to express my contrition for what I had said ; but still his conduct *did* want explanation, and that checked me. At last he resumed. ‘ You have accused me, Mr. Bruce, in your own mind—and indeed before others too ’ (and here his colour mounted) ‘ of a crime of the blackest die ; one which has ever stood foremost in the catalogue of horrors : of pretending friendship, and intending—murder ! Such accusations are hard to brook ; and though I might treat them with the contempt which they deserve, yet I prefer telling you that they are unjust, and unfounded. Your idea of course is that I procured—purposely—an appointment for Mr. St. Clair on board a vessel destined to the fatal coast of Africa ; but that I did *not* do. His appointment and promotion I am free to acknowledge were my work ; and whatever my motive may have been, a young sailor without much fortune, or any particular interest, need not I think quarrel with me for it. But the destination of his vessel was not only unknown to me at the time of his appointment, but my disturbance was so great when I learnt it, that I set off instantly for London, and stopped neither night nor day, till from the Western Highlands of Scotland, I found myself within the walls of the Admiralty. I made every effort in my power to obtain an exchange of vessels ;—spoke to every one whom

I thought could possibly help me ; till, wearied I suppose, with my importunity, I was given to understand, that the obtaining my first request was considered a great thing ; and that I must not ‘ expect to nominate to stations also.’ ‘ You know me well enough, Mr. Bruce, at least not to doubt my word ; and you must therefore, I think feel, that the part of David towards Uriah I have *not* acted ; and if you have received that impression from Mr. St. Clair, perhaps you will have the kindness to inform him that he has misjudged me.’ ‘ That impression was never received from him, Captain Normanton,’ I replied ; ‘ it was my own mind, and the appearance of things which suggested it. And indeed I am proud for St. Clair’s sake to say, that whenever I have spoken in any way against your proceedings—and I have done so, perhaps too much, though to him only—he has invariably spoken of you with forbearance, and kindness ; and blamed me for my harsh judgments. (What a flame of emotions rushed to his face !) But for what I have said to-day, I feel that I ought indeed greatly to entreat your forgiveness.’ ‘ You have it, Mr. Bruce,’ he replied with considerable feeling ; ‘ though one of your honourable mind may perhaps be able to form some idea of what it must have been to have had such an accusation brought against me—and before—others

too.' And he coughed nervously, and looked around, as at the prospect.

"‘I do feel it, Captain Normanton,’ I replied; ‘and cannot sufficiently hate myself for having made it; or for having allowed my mind to harbour even so black a thought.’ I really did feel horrified at myself; and when he spoke with so much feeling, and so readily forgave me;—and when I thought too of the effort he had made to obtain your exchange, I could not but think of your words, that ‘you could name many good things in him.’ Yet still I felt as if it would be insincere if I said nothing more, and let it be imagined that I thought he was right in all he had done;—though being so much his junior—for I should think he is full ten years older than I am—I found it difficult to intrude my opinion upon him. But I could not feel satisfied without doing it, so continued: ‘Yet, Captain Normanton, if you will at this moment of explanation allow me to speak my sincere opinion, I would say that I still think your exerting yourself to get St. Clair employed abroad just now, and separating him from Miss Sydney at such a moment, must be considered as anything but a kind, or a considerate act.’

"How ghastly may a living face become! But for the glowing fire of the eye, and the convulsive contractions of the brow and lips, I should

have thought that I had a corpse stalking by my side! I could not but feel for him; for it must have been a moment of riving anguish to him. He must of course have suspected your engagement with Miss Sydney before, but the word that confirms a dreaded suspicion, falls on the brain like fire! I saw he could not speak; so in mercy tried to do so myself. But it was impossible to turn off the subject; so thinking that now the sword had entered, it was better to thrust it up to the hilt at once, I added: 'You must be aware, Captain Normanton, that St. Clair is engaged to Miss Sydney.' 'I am aware of no such thing,' he answered fiercely; his eye glaring from out of his ashy countenance with demoniacal fire. 'It is the case however,' I continued, without seeming to observe the violence of his emotion; 'but of course if you did not know it, that alters the case.' I had meant to soothe his feelings by saying this; but the moment the words were out of my mouth, I could not but perceive their bitter irony. I thought I saw a terrible conflict going on in his mind; but if that were the case, the better, and more honourable part of his nature triumphed; and with a truthful boldness which recalled the honest blood to his cheek, he said after a few minutes' silence: 'I have been brought Mr. Bruce, by some strange means, into an extraordinary position with regard to you; and I feel that perhaps some further explanation,

however disagreeable, may be necessary. Your accusation of me, though you have retracted it as to its worst features, yet evidently proves that you think I have some particular reason for wishing Mr. St. Clair's absence at this time ; and I will not deny that I may have. I perceive too, that you have formed your own opinion as to what that reason is ; and in that too, you are not perhaps mistaken. That I have a high regard for Miss Sydney is true ; but it is also true that in what I have done I have endeavoured to study her happiness as much,—at least I have meant to do so,—as my own. You tell me that she is engaged to Mr. St. Clair !—I ought not certainly to doubt your authority, as you are so great a friend of his (said bitterly), but I can only say that when last here, General Sydney told me positively that there was nothing settled between them ; and that indeed through losses, which I was grieved to find he had sustained, he did not think it likely that anything would ever come of the 'childish nonsense,' as he called it, that there had been between them—I repeat his own words. This was said in answer merely to an observation I took the liberty of making, as to the strange appearance which the two families living so completely together, bore ; and of the conjectures which would most likely be the consequence of such an arrangement. Understanding this therefore to be the case, you cannot charge me I think,

with acting a part hostile to Miss Sydney's interests, when I endeavoured to separate her from a young man whose attachment, and constant society might become dangerous to her peace.'

"He paused as if expecting me to speak, and I did so; and informed him of General Sydney's having given his formal consent to your engagement before your departure. 'Certainly,' I added, 'if your conduct had been disinterested, I should have said it might have been kind and judicious; but the feeling that a latent motive of your own lurked beneath the act, cannot but alter one's estimate of it. You will forgive me for speaking so openly, Captain Normanton?' 'Oh! certainly, certainly,' he replied; though evidently much irritated and offended at my observation; (at which I am not surprised). 'To separate them for a time,' I continued, 'particularly when by doing so, you would further their future prospect of marrying and being happy together, might indeed be the act of a friend—and may God grant that that be the issue! but to seek to separate them entirely, and destroy such a love as theirs,—that is an act, Captain Normanton, which I could envy no man.' I had lashed myself up into quite a small storm; the waves whereof surging to and fro, were in no wise pacified by the contemptuous smile which I saw ostentatiously exhibited on our friend's curled lip. 'You must excuse my smiling,

Mr. Bruce,' said the irritating fellow; (I didn't though) 'and believe me, it is not in contempt of you, or of your friend; for I am not quite ignorant of the opinions which are usually held at your age on these subjects; but trust one who is of maturer years,—that the fancies of young heads seldom sink so very deep into young hearts, as you seem inclined to suppose.'—(I could have murdered him! but didn't; and that ardent desire not transpiring through word or deed, he continued without interruption). 'I can fully believe that you think me thoroughly heartless, and thoroughly selfish; but on those points my conscience entirely acquits me; and I can say with truth, that did I not think I had the means of making Miss Sydney happier than she could be by a miserable marriage with a young man without fortune like Mr. St. Clair, I would abandon all thoughts of her for ever!—As it is, she shall at least be allowed to make her choice.' 'She has done that already, Captain Normanton,' I replied,—with infinite malice and vengeance—'and irrevocably; or I am much mistaken.' 'We shall see,' he answered, with that complacent, pre-triumphant smile, which we have often said was so utterly insufferable. I was too much irritated to speak; not I am sorry to say that I purposely laid any restraint on my unruly member, but that there poured in upon my mind such an

*embarras de richesses* in the way of vituperation, scorn, insult, fury, invective, &c. :—all which solicited clamourously to be made use of—that whilst I was running through them to select what could best suit my triple purpose of insulting him, avenging you, and relieving myself, I suddenly discovered that my temper was cooled, and that the choice moment of revenge had escaped ; so finding myself silent—silent I remained.—Nothing on earth you know, subdues like silence ! The ‘last word’ may claim its ‘Ovation,’ but the ‘Triumph,’ must be invariably decreed to the ‘first silence.’ It drops like lead on your opponent ; who, expecting resistance, finds it not, and falls to the ground. He strives to raise himself, to explain, to soften off, to retract, to conciliate ;—while the consciousness of your quiet scrutiny makes him sink deeper and deeper in the mire. Yet I envy not the man who can systematically pursue this plan of subjugation ; who can calmly, in supposed superiority, watch the struggles of another, and enjoy his confusion ;—I have as much respect for the brute who can bear to subdue an animal to his own fantastic ways, by starving it, and keeping it from rest. No ! I prefer a thousand times the man whose vehemence lays him open to blame on every side ; and would rather help an adversary *to* all his excuses, and *through* all his difficulties, than take the cold-blooded

station, and callous feelings of the other for a moment. Involuntarily therefore it was, that on this occasion, that station was assumed by me,—(and that by reason of hot, not cold bloodedness). But the effect was the same on the unhappy Captain; who began explaining away his confidence, and frittering away his hopes, and his feelings, and his wishes, till he left his moral self the most threadbare skeleton in creation. His excuses however, though I could not but perceive their sophistry, left me at least with the full persuasion of his really strong attachment to Miss Sydney, and of his willingness to devote every energy of his life to her happiness; (according to his own ideas and fashions). So, vexed, and troubled as I was. I could not help feeling and speaking more kindly to him than I had been able to do before.—And so we parted!

“You need not I am sure fear anything more for Miss Sydney, than the annoyance of his assiduities; though that is bad enough. Indeed what can you fear when you have her father’s word, and her heart? England is a land of liberty, and happily not of the licence it was a century ago; and chaises and four, and men in masks are at a discount. So rest in peace, brave son of Neptune! ‘Give trouble to the winds—hope and be undismayed!’ As long as I am on shore I shall keep a sharp look-out a-head, and let you know how

things go on ; and it is not for me to bid you raise your trusting eye to a Higher and Greater Watcher ; Watcher and Ruler too ! I have little more to say, for of common news I have none, and you care nothing ; and methinks I need not make excuses for not having done justice even to an ‘ Office frank ;’ for if your anchor is a-peak when you begin this portentous epistle, it will probably be stuck fast in the pleasant mud of the Bight of Benin before you have finished it.

“ Ever yours,

“ NORMAN BRUCE.”

## CHAPTER XXV.

Some untutored thirst for God, the root of every pleasure.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

The intolerant world might have its evil-speaking hushed into silence before the devout might which labours for the hire, not of silver and gold, but of saved souls,—and the sunny godliness which is loftiest gain.—ARRANGED FROM “MERKLAND.”

It was in vain, after reading Bruce's letter, that I tried as he had told me, to “give trouble to the winds;” they would not take it; or if they did, it was only to blow it back again with twofold violence to my heart. I had not yet attained the blessing of a thoroughly trustful spirit; and my mind tormented itself with wilfully imagining evil to the being I loved so well. Her letter lay by me unopened—unremembered indeed for a time—so absorbed was I in troublous thoughts about herself; but at length, remembering it, I snatched

it up with repentant haste, and eagerly read its soothing, cheering words. She knew nothing of course, of Captain Normanton's communication to Bruce; but she could fully feel from his manner, that he had by no means given up his former intentions with regard to herself. But annoying as this was, she felt confident, she said, of her own heart; and of the love and mercy of God; and she spoke in bright and joyful words of the happiness of our reunion, and of the blessedness of our being one in heart even then. She talked of the sunny cottage we were to have when I returned, the flowers we were to cultivate, the books we were to read, the godly works of mercy we were to do together—till my heart glowed within me at the bright picture that she drew; and my eager fancy placed already half within my grasp its enchanting happiness.

Yet after a time, I could not but think, that beneath this veil of radiant colouring which she had thrown over the future, there lay a deep depression in her heart; and though I grieved to think it should be so, I could not but the more admire the disinterestedness of that love which strove rather to comfort me, than to obtain sympathy for its own troubles; and I determined that neither her efforts, or her example should be lost upon me. I therefore—after impulsively thanking my God for giving her such strength, and blessing

me with the love of such a being—sat down to write to her in the same strain of animated hope ; and cheered and strengthened by the effort which God enabled me to make, I finished my whole letter without one complaint, or one murmuring expression ; though the thought that it was the last which for years I should write to her from England, almost at times overcame my resolution.

With Bruce I could not so well sustain my efforts at cheerfulness. I thanked him however a thousand times for his kindness ; and for his promise of watching over Mary's happiness, and of letting me know how things went on ; a promise which I valued now more than ever ; as I saw plainly, by Mary's letter, that should any trouble arise to her, she would be cautious not to mention it ; so that she might be suffering—sorely suffering, while I was hoping that all was well, and prospering with her.

My letters concluded, I went to my cabin, and commending myself to God, slept the dreamless sleep which is so often in mercy granted to those whose waking hours are sad ; and having obtained leave to go on shore the next morning, (we were to sail in the evening) the rising sun found me once more treading the smooth lawns of Mount Edgcumbe ; once more enjoying its mild air, and exquisite scenery. I gathered a flower,—one of the “ pale perishing ” flowers of autumn, and on my

return to the ship, I put it into my letter to Mary, telling her to keep it till I should redeem it with glowing flowers from sunnier lands. Then sealing and dispatching my letters, I was soon busily engaged in my part of the bustling business of getting the ship under way.

There was scarcely a ripple on the water, and we moved but slowly, so that England was still in sight the next morning. But before nightfall, I saw from the mast-head, the last dim line that marked where my country lay, sink down, down into the leaden ocean. It was like burying my dead, and I felt desolate indeed !

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“Taking a last look of the old land, Sir?” said Lawrence who had seen me go up aloft, and watched till I lighted on deck again.

“Yes, Lawrence, she’s fairly down now. May God’s blessing rest on her, and on those we love in her.”

“Amen, Sir,” said the old man reverentially; “no one can blame one for blessing the land where one is born, nor the friends who are friends to us in it. It is but natur’.”

“It is nature, and duty too,” I replied. “But what do you mean by ‘friends who are friends’? those who are not friends, are not friends, are they?”

“Ah! you’re too sharp upon me, Mr. St. Clair,”

said the old man good humouredly, with a sly sideways nod of the head; "too sharp by half; but I take it, you know pretty well what I mean too."

"Why I rather think I do," I said; "at least I suppose you mean that those who stand in the place of friends are not always friendly; and that you would ask a blessing only on those who were so."

"That's it, Sir, right enough," he replied; "and that I say again, is natur'."

"It may be," I observed; "but a better Teacher than nature tells us to do more than that, Lawrence. We are told to love our enemies, and to bless them that curse us."

"Well, Sir, that's very good—and I've nothing to say against it, as to the matter of talk; but I'm doubtful as to how I should set about a-doing it."

"Why it is rather difficult to be sure," I replied; and a sigh arose as I felt how difficult it was! But great things are said to encourage us to it: 'That ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven,' 'and if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.' Those are great promises for such as you and me, Lawrence."

"Yes, Sir, they are mighty-sounding promises indeed. And yet I can't rightly say as I understand much what they mean. I am but a poor

scholar, Mr. St. Clair, and haven't but little book-larnin', more's the pity."

"More's the pity indeed; for it is a great thing to be able to read, and get one's head and heart supplied from the stores of wiser minds; especially from the full, abundant store of the word of God."

"Why as to that I can read pretty smartly in the Testament too; but I han't got no time, you see; let alone having no Bible here on board."

"Did you read it much when you were on shore?"

"I can't say, Sir, as I did—much; my wife, she that's gone, poor soul! was always a begging me to read it, and read it; and I did so two or three times to pleasure her. But bless you! I couldn't understand it, you see; and there was but little profit, nor pleasure in going over and over what might a'most ha' been Chineese for me."

"Couldn't you understand what you read?"

"I could make out the words, Sir; least-ways, many of 'em; but I couldn't no how make out what it was all about. Why, if you was to go and listen to a shipmate in the midst of his yarn, he might spin it as long as he would, but if you didn't know the beginnin' of it, you'd never rightly understand the end."

"That's true; but have you never had any instruction as to the things of God? You've at

least been to the service every Sunday on board, and that must have taught you something."

"Well, it may have taught me a summut, Sir; for I'm not quite like the Hindoos or Joss worshippers neither; I know better than that too. I know there is but one God, and that Jesus Christ is His Son, as they say; but any more than that I can't say as I see my way through at all. I often wonder indeed why our chaplains, and such sort, don't talk plainer for us poor fellows, and explain matters a little more; it would do a power of good! I've been a church-goer now, on sea and land, these sixty years pretty nigh, and yet I comes out of church knowing no more than when I goes into it; and the same may be said of scores and scores of us; and it will be a hard thing, and weary work when death comes on, to have to travel a road not one step of which one knows. It's different with you young gentlemen; you've fine larnin' given you, and a power of masters and teachers from the time you can speak. And yet I'm minded sometimes, that after all some of you aren't much better neither than we poor ignorant seamen. I'm not speaking of you, Mr. St. Clair, as you well know, Sir, nor of many others; but some, I think you must see yourself, Sir,—no offence, I hope,—isn't much the better of the larnin' they've got."

“That is because the right beginning was not made with them, Lawrence, more than with you. No knowledge can make the heart right but the knowledge of the ways, and the will,—and above all, of the love of God. I can speak to that from experience ; for till very lately,—till last year indeed,—I cannot say that I really knew anything clearly of Christ’s holy religion.”

“But you was never a wild ’un like many of the others neither,” said the old man, looking at me with a kind sort of respect in his mild countenance.

“And who is a better or a steadier seaman than you, Lawrence?” I said, smiling, in answer to his kindly look ; “and yet you say you still want the teaching which I wanted too, before?”

The colour deepened in the old seaman’s swarthy cheek as he answered my compliment with a little bow of natural courtesy, and a smile of rather sad expression.

“I thank ye, Sir, you was always one of a kind speech ; but somehow that’ll not do, as my old woman, God bless her ! used to say ; there’s summut amiss yet. Hauling a rope taut, or standing to your guns like a man, can’t ’arn heaven for you no hows ; I can’t have so poor a thought of it as that comes to, let it be how it will.”

“I am heartily glad you haven’t,” I replied. “If you had, I should feel that there were but

little hope for you ; but now I think you're in a fair way of getting what you want."

"How so, Sir?" he said, withdrawing his eye quickly from the horizon ; which, with the habitual watchfulness of a sailor he had been instinctively examining during most of our conversation, and fixing it suddenly on me ; "sure I scarce knows what I do want."

"I can tell you though I think. You want to hear something that you can understand about God ; and you want to know how you can get your sins pardoned ;—you want to feel at ease about all this, and comfortable in your mind. Isn't that it?"

"Why yes, Sir, you've hit it pretty nigh, I believe," said the old man with an animated air ; "and if you can tell me how to get those things, why I shall be uncommon glad, and will thank you kindly too."

"I will try what I can do," I said ; "but I'm afraid I shall be but a poor master ; for I am only a poor learner as yet myself. However if it be but a little, that's better than nothing ; so what I shall first say, shall be in the words of the blessed Lord Himself : 'Ask and ye shall receive.' Have you ever asked God to teach you, Lawrence?"

"I can't say as I have, Sir," he answered ; "nor do I rightly know how to."

"If I had promised to give you anything you wanted, shouldn't you know how to ask me for it?"

"To be sure I should."

"Do just the same then to God; ask Him with your heart, as you would speak to a friend in secret. Just say, 'O Lord, teach me to know and love Thee,' and look for His answer, in yourself, and in things about you. He will not speak Himself to you in any miraculous way; but will speak through the voices of other people, and through books which you may read; and through the comfort He will send into your heart. Voices of men and books are instruments which He uses; but unless He make your heart ready and willing, to listen and learn, they will be of no use to you."

"That sounds reasonable," he replied. "So I'm to ask Him to give me power to understand; and then I'm to listen to those who will teach me—to you Mr. St. Clair, Sir, if you'll be so good."

"Yes; but you must always remember and ask God to teach you as to whether what I say is truth or not, for I may be mistaken. If you trust to Him, He will be sure to lead you right."

I then spoke to him as well as I was able of his own fallen state through sin, and of God's mercy in sending a Saviour; of that Saviour's

love in dying for him, and of the pleasure of working for such a friend; and it was touching to see how the old man listened to words which for the first time bore a distinct meaning to his mind, and brought a softening feeling to his heart. I spoke on, till my own soul kindled with the high themes of which I treated; and as I enlarged on the love which made Christ, "while we were yet sinners, die for us;"—and saw the tears gather slowly in the old man's dim blue eye as he listened; I seemed to enter into the apostle's feelings of apparently surprised enthusiasm, when he exclaimed: "Herein is love!"

That conversation, and others which I had with Lawrence and with some of my messmates were of great use to me; and I fully felt the truth of the words: "They that water shall themselves be watered." I felt my own soul grow in grace, and strength, and love; and by so often speaking of the free salvation of Christ, I found my own soul opening to understand that blessed doctrine; and though I could not yet dare to take it to myself, yet I began to understand somewhat of the abiding peace of Mary's, and the rapturous joy of Bruce's spirit, under the conviction of it; and besought that like them, I too might learn fully to rejoice in God my Saviour.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

They were the only words I ever heard from yon man, but I will remember them, and bring them up for him in the last day.

But more—thy billows and thy depths have more ;  
High hearts and brave are gathered to thy breast ;  
They hear not now the booming waters roar,  
The battle-thunders cannot break their rest ;  
Keep thy red gold, and gems, thou stormy grave,  
Give back the true and brave.

To thee the love of woman hath gone down ;  
Dark roll thy waves o'er manhood's noble head ;  
O'er youth's bright locks, and beauty's flow'ry crown,—  
Yet must thou hear a voice : “ Restore the dead.”  
Earth shall reclaim her precious things of thee ;  
Give back the dead, thou sea !

MRS. HEMANS.

WE sailed pleasantly before the wind for some time ; and congratulated ourselves on having calm weather through the generally stormy Bay of Biscay.

But it did not unfortunately last long ; for just as we were clearing the bay, and rounding Cape Finisterre, the wind chopped round full in our teeth ; and after heading us for some days, blew at last such a gale as I think I never saw in my life.

We could not show a stitch of canvas but what was split into ribbons in a moment ; not a man of us took off our dripping, and drenched clothes for upwards of three days and nights. Our foremast went by the board ; and had nearly carried me with it ; but old Lawrence saw it coming, and having always of late, the good old man ! had a special eye to me when he could, he seized me from behind by the collar of my jacket, and with rough, but saving violence, jerked me away with a force that stretched me my whole length on the deck. I lay stunned for a moment ; but was roused almost immediately, by a tremendous shock, which made the whole ship quiver from her bows to her stern. I started up, just as every one else almost fell flat down ; for we had been forced to put the helm up, and let the vessel run before the wind ; and she had been ploughing through the waters at such a furious rate, that the sudden check overthrew everything. We thought all was over with us. It seemed evident that we had struck upon a rock ; and it was equally evident that we must go down. The ship being stuck fast, offered of course an infinitely

greater resistance to the on-coming waves, than when driven before the wind ; and they now struck her with such force, that it seemed a miracle that she hung together for a moment.

We had previously fired guns as signals of distress, but now they were all quite useless. Consternation sat on every face ; and happy indeed was he who had not then his "faith to seek." Trial enough it was for those whose anchor for eternity was cast on safe shores ; but what it must have been for others one dare not think ! My first feeling was heart-lifting thankfulness that Mary was not there ; my second, one of agony, lest I should be lost to her. Then succeeded a wonderful calm, a peaceful giving up of myself, and her, and everything, to the good governance of God,—to His gracious keeping. The thorough feeling that "love ruled might"—left no room for fear within my heart.

The happiness of that moment of perfect trust I can never forget ; nor can words convey the idea of it to another. I had not sought it ; but had merely power passively to receive the impressions which God was pleased to make upon my mind ; but never can I be sufficiently grateful that they were of a nature, not only to afford me such strength and peace then, but to be a perpetual source of thankful enjoyment whenever their blessed remembrance returned upon my soul.

I have often since felt this same unsought, supernatural peace and quietude poured into my heart under circumstances of exciting trouble,—but never to the same degree as then.

I was soon, however, roused to a fresh sense of the fearful strait we were in, by the rough grasp of old Lawrence's iron hand. He shook mine as if bidding me farewell; though the old habits of discipline and respect, mixing curiously with the feeling of equality produced by a common danger, made him beg my pardon for doing so.

"It's all right, with you, Sir," he added; "and I feel somehow as if it was with me too.—God bless you, Sir, God bless you for teaching me the way to Heaven; and if I get there as I hope, through the blessed Lord,—it will be pleasant to thank you for it there again—and for ever."

I wrung the old man's hand in silence; for my soul was for the moment overpowered at the idea he presented before it: of his being for ever grateful to me for his salvation. I could have prostrated myself in devoted adoration before God; and I felt an almost delirious gratitude—enhanced by the terror of that dread hour—at thinking that the soul of this humble, childlike Christian might be saved through my instrumentality; "snatched as a brand from the burning," or, (which image as may be supposed came with peculiar force to me at that moment) caught up

as a drowning wretch from the whelming waters. "Oh, the riches both of the depths and of the heights of redeeming love!" Oh! the ineffable power of God, which at such a moment could transport the soul into regions of happiness, which in securer hours we might seek for long in vain!

After a few moments, Lawrence again spoke; though it was with difficulty that his voice could be heard amid the din and crush of noises which surrounded us. We were all clinging to the rigging, or lashed to other parts of the vessel to save ourselves from being washed overboard; for every mountain-wave that came, broke over us, and swept the deck from stem to stern.

"There's no saying, you know, Sir," he began, "how these sort of things may turn out, and you may get ashore, while I go to the bottom. If so, you'll remember the lad, at Mrs. Storers, No. 25, Paradise Court, Pancrass. His father, and mother, and gra'mother's dead, and the old man will be gone then too; and he is but a slip of a lad, and never was a strong 'un; and a helping hand, or a kind word even, does a deal o' good sometimes when the heart is down, as his is like to be. He took on dreadful bad when my poor woman went, but then he had me with him; but now,—all alone—"

The old man turned away, for his voice was choked. I assured him that should God spare

my life, I would always keep an eye upon the boy. He nodded in grateful acknowledgment; but he feared to speak, I think, lest his pent-up feelings should give way. I said a few cheering words; and after a while, recovering himself, he began again, but with great hesitation:

“If it should be t’other way, Sir—for no one knows how these things may chance—and I should be the one to be spared—if there was anything I could do for you, Mrs. St. Clair, I should be proud and happy to do it;—that is—not happy like—for I pray the Lord it may not be so—but ready, you know, Sir,—glad to pleasure you, if there were anything you might wish.”

“Thank you, Lawrence,” I replied. “These greedy waters will never give up my body I suspect if once they get it; but if by any chance it should be found, I should wish you to take this ring off my finger, and my letter-case from my pocket, and let Miss Sydney have them, when you could; and give this picture round my neck, to my dear mother; tell her it was what I loved best on earth, of things not living,—so sent it to her.”

As I said this, the thought of what the sorrow of the two beings I loved so much would be, rushed so fearfully over my mind, that it overwhelmed me for a moment. My head sunk upon my arm, and a storm of uncontrollable anguish heaved my breast; but it was a suffering too deep

for tears, and found vent only in groans of mortal agony.

"Don't take on, Sir," said the old seaman, in a hoarse voice; "I'll do it, please God; though I pray the Lord I mayn't have it to do. But am I to say never a word from you to the young lady? nothing but the ring and the pocket-book?"

"Nothing, nothing," I replied hastily; "our hearts are one, old man, and she will know what I would say."

At that moment there was a cry that the dead-lights were stove in, and the water pouring in torrents into the Captain's cabin.

All then gave themselves up for lost; and the frantic shrieks of despair—mingled with oaths and curses—which sounded on every side—joined to the creaking, and groaning of the timbers, the raving of the winds, and furious tumult of the waters—made it seem as if we were in the infernal regions. It was in vain that I tried to speak a word of peace, and faith to those near me; the God whom they had despised in the day of safety, they seemed to find an insane joy in blaspheming in their hour of peril; and such horror seized me at hearing their fearful oaths, as almost took away every particle of my strength.

The only being to whom my words seemed of any comfort, was young Somerville; who, crouched down by my side, was clinging to me with one hand,

whilst the other was clasped over his eyes, as though with the sight, he could shut out also the sense of danger. Through his slight fingers however, the tears trickled fast, as he rocked himself from side to side, murmuring with his touching, childish voice: "If I could only have seen him again!—if I could only have seen him, once more!"

Well did I feel who that "him" was; and the yearning love of this young heart, touched me to the very soul. I bade him not despair; but pray to God to love, and to protect him, for His sake, who when on the raging waters, said "Peace," and they obeyed Him; and as he listened to my words the mournful cry of his heart ceased, and he answered, "I will—I will."

Lowering the boats was out of the question then; they could not have lived a moment in such a sea. But as long as there was life, there was hope; so I lashed the boy to a coop that was near, and bid him trust himself to the mercy of God. All this takes long in telling, but occupied but few minutes in doing.

Lawrence had disappeared from my side. I had been busied with Edward Somerville, so had not seen what had become of him; but on looking round, I just caught a glimpse of his weather-beaten head, disappearing down the hatchway. I started forward to follow him, for I understood

in a moment what was the forlorn-hope on which he had bravely volunteered ; and I determined to lessen his danger if possible, by sharing it. But the Captain bade me stay where I was :

“ There are hands enough for the work,” he said, “ if it can be done— ; if not— !”

I then found that four other men had been ordered below to help Lawrence ; and I had nothing to do but to wait the anxious result like the rest. I went back to Somerville, who had been in despair when he saw me leave his side ; and told him he must rouse his spirits, and try to look boldly on the danger, or he would never be ready, if called on, to venture his life as that brave old seaman had done. This animated him a little ; but he was so young ! scarcely twelve years old, and so slight and weakly. Oh ! parents little know what they do, when they send children out on such hard services. It was far worse, as I have said before, in those days—fifteen years ago—than it is now, and boys were sent out at an earlier age ; but it is bad enough even now, God knows !

The moments seemed like ages as we waited to see if the men below succeeded in their bold attempt ; but many had not passed when a man who had secured himself in amongst the mizen shrouds exclaimed : that “ one of them had been washed out of the cabin window ;” the sad truth

of which was in a few moments more, fearfully confirmed, by the body being borne towards us on the crest of a huge wave, and cast with frightful force on the deck,—half hid in a shroud of froth, and foam. Though we all had to cling on to the ship for our lives; yet many an effort was made to catch the body as it passed, and save it from the fury of the waters. But in vain! and, horrible it was to see it thrown about, and dashed against the masts and sides; striking against, first one thing, then another, as the retreating waters dragged it over again.

The moment I saw it, I knew it to be Lawrence's body; and I might have been certain too by the tranquillity of the features, and the helpless manner in which it rolled over and over in the waters,—the long thin hair now swept across the face, and now streaming back from the high daring brow,—that the spirit of the brave old man was not there, but at peace. Yet when once again the body, now sinking, now floating, was borne past us in the sea, and thrown against the ship's side, close to me as I was still standing on the waist, near Somerville, I lost all thought of everything but saving him; and loosing my hold of the vessel, I caught at his clothes as he passed, and was in a moment dragged overboard with him.

Ah! what a shriek came from Edward Somerville as he saw me go over!—piercing, in the

shrillness of his child's voice, through all the roaring and raving of the storm; for what can drown the cry of human agony?

But soon the gurgling waters as they poured in at my ears, and down my gasping throat, choked all sense and hearing. I was a good swimmer; but what could human arms avail against such a sea?—against such waves, breaking, as they did, against the vessel, and rushing back with such fury against the other waters, as sent their clashing heads curling to the very sky; while around them was a chaos of foaming eddies and whirlpools. Exertion was vain; and human strength, as nought! A moment's struggling, a moment's frightful, frantic agony, one gasp—another—and another;—and the green waters had closed above my head. And then came a sensation of indescribable peace, and a bright glory flitted before me, mingled with visions of green fields, and meadows, and calm waters; then sleep—sleep—sleep.

[As much of the narrative following the events just recorded, could not have been circumstantially known to Mr. St. Clair, it is thought, best to relate it as received from other sources.]

L O N D O N :

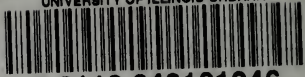
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